Guru Gobind Singh

(A Biographical Study)

by

J. S. Grewal & S. S. Bal

with a Foreword

by

Professor R. R. Sethi

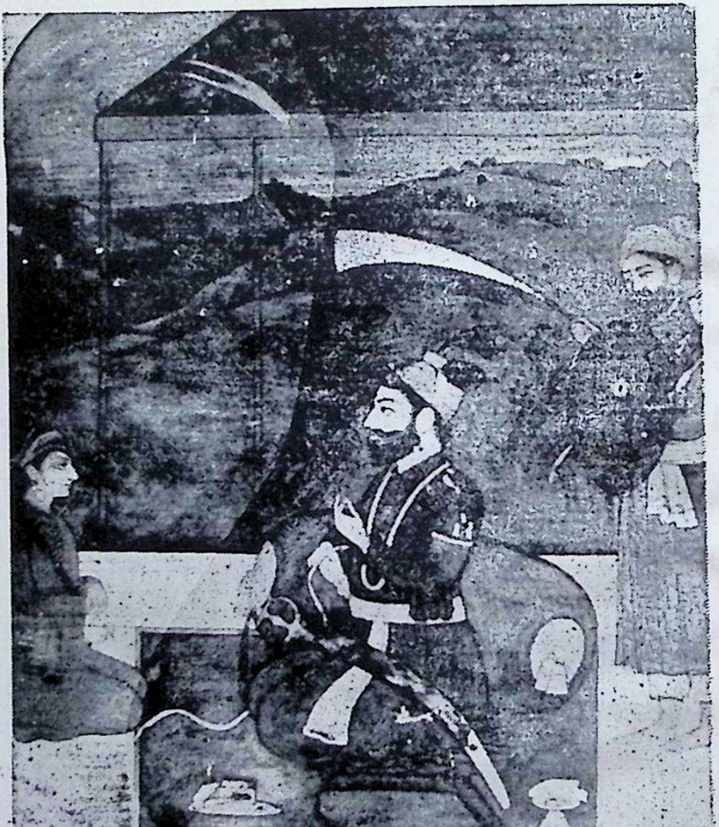
Department of History
Panjab University
CHANDIGARH
1967

I speak as my conscience dictates, without enmity towards any one and without the fear of a mortal.

Guru Gobind Singh

(from the *Bachittar Natak*, a free version)

'Portrait' of Guru Gobind Singh
(Guler style, latter half of the 18th century)



Courtesy : Dr. M. S. Randhawa

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Foreword

The tercentenary of Guru Gobind Singh's birth is being celebrated all over the country in various ways. The Panjab University, Chandigarh, had also decided to pay its tribute to the memory of this one of 'the greatest Indians of all ages'; and this biographical study is a token of that tribute.

A British historian has remarked that Guru Gobind Singh had made himself master of the imagination of his followers. This remark can easily be extended to the historians of Guru Gobind Singh. There is hardly a historian of the Sikhs who has not underlined the crucial importance of Guru Gobind Singh's life and mission in Sikh history. This historiograpical tradition is in itself an acknowledgement of his greatness as a historical figure. In publishing this biographical study of Guru Gobind Singh the Department of History, Panjab University, Chandigarh is following that tradition in historiography.

When the proposals for celebrating the tercentenary were being considered, we in the Department of History had strongly felt that our own contribution could best be a biography of Guru Gobind Singh.

I am grateful to Shri Suraj Bhan, Vice-Chancellor, Panjab University, Chandigarh, for accepting our proposal and for giving us the opportunity to undertake this biography. Dr. J. S. Grewal and Dr. S. S. Bal had been eager to undertake the work and they started on it in right earnest immediately after the decision had been taken. They did not have much time at their disposal, but their earlier interest in the subject was a great advantage. I have remained in a continual touch with their work in all its stages and I have no hesitation in saying that they have gone much farther than my own expectations.

The task of writing a biography of Guru Gobind Singh is not an easy one. Much has already been written on his life and mission. But going through that work, a student of history cannot help feeling that most of the time he is confronting the Guru Gobind Singh of later tradition. This is partly inevitable because of the paucity of contemporary evidence on the life of Guru Gobind Singh. There are, no doubt, his compositions which reveal, so to speak, the inner man and provide some important clues to the external events of his life. There are his *hukamnamas* too which provide a deep insight into his relationship with some of his disciples. There are some useful news-items and *farmans* which reveal what at times others were thinking, or doing, about Guru Gobind Singh. There are also the writings of some of his direct disciples, which reveal the fascination which he held for them. All this is a first rate material for his life, but how meagre it is for a full life-sketch. The biographers of Guru Gobind Singh have perforce to depend upon later tradition, which by its very abundance increases the difficulties of a historical approach.

The authors of this short biography once confided to me that left to themselves they would have spent at least a few more years on the subject before publicizing the results of their researches. Any one would agree with them if this was meant to underline the importance of their subject and the need for its thorough study. But perhaps they were over-modest about the work which they have already done. Their first task was to know all that has been said and thought about Guru Gobind Singh; and then to go through all the relevant source material which has been brought to light so far, looking at the same for fresh materials. As it would be obvious to any one acquainted with historical research in this country, or elsewhere, this ideal is not always easy to achieve. I would not say that the authors of this monograph have achieved that ideal; in fact they were working within several limitations; but they have largely succeeded in their aim of attempting an intelligible account of Guru Gobind Singh's life and making it as meaningful as the available evidence would permit them to do so.

I am personally struck with the intellectual integrity of the authors of this monograph : their aim has been to say nothing that might be unwarranted and to say all that their evidence has obliged them to say. Their presentation might be inadequate; it might even be mistaken; but it would certainly be redeemed by a deep sympathy which they have with the subject of their study. I am glad to have acquainted myself with the historical Guru Gobind Singh through these pages and I feel sure that the reader would not be disappointed with their attempt.

It is said sometimes that history in essence is tragic. The conflict of human wills and aspirations, which would be evident from the study of any period or area of human history, is often extended to whole social groups and to human institutions. During the life of Guru Gobind Singh, there were at least three major forces which were in potential or actual conflict — the Sikh *panth* with its articulate socio-religious identity, the Rajput Chiefs in the Punjab hills forming the apex of a socio-political system which had been sanctified by a tradition of several centuries, and the Mughal Empire with its elaborate political and administrative network spread wide over the sub-continent. It must be said to the credit of the authors of this biographical study that they have not only seen the relevance of this basic conflict for Guru Gobind Singh's life and mission, they have also studied all the parties with a commendable sympathy.

Gobind, born at Patna on Saturday, the 22nd of December, 1666, had remained there for five and a half years under the care of his mother, grandmother and his maternal uncle, Kripal, in the absence of his father, Guru Tegh Bahadur. He was brought to Makhowal (Anandpur) to be trained for the office he was going to hold. He was only nine years old when he succeeded to the *gaddi* at Makhowal after the execution of his father at Delhi in 1675. He was still to educate himself for the duties of his grave office.

Fortunately for Gobind, his uncle Kripal was there to train him and to guide the *panth* in face of the self-interested *masands* to enable him to stand on his own. However, his education in Persian, Sanskrit and the *Adi Granth* was not yet complete and he was yet to master the art of horsemanship, archery and war before he was called upon to acknowledge the authority of the Chief of Kahlur (Bilaspur). But Kripal was unwilling to identify the young Guru with any power or authority which in his view might be unjust. Consequently, Gobind had to leave his 'home', Anandpur.

The Guru's headquarters were shifted to Paonta, then on the borders of the Sirmur (Nahan) state. There his poetic genius continued to flower and its first fruits suggest his preoccupation with the nature of religious missions and his decision to fight for righteousness. In his treatment of Puranic literature, one may discern his conscious or unconscious attempt to broad-base his mission by an indirect appeal to Hindu tradition. By 1688 he had grown into a determined but not a bitter man and he had become his own master before he was obliged to fight, the first battle of his life, against the Chief of Garhwal. Gobind's success in this battle may be taken as a measure of his sound generalship and of the confidence which he could inspire among a considerable number of his disciples even in his early twenties.

Having spent three years at Paonta, Guru Gobind Singh returned to the security of Anandpur with the reputation of a victorious general. He was invited to help the Hill Chiefs who were pretentious enough to free themselves from the Mughal yoke. The Guru's experience soon disillusioned him with the Chiefs and their politics, and he tried to grapple with the fundamental problems of his mission. His treatment of the *avatars* in an immensely productive literary creativity and the declaration of his mission in the *Bachittar Natak* are enough to show that he had come to regard himself as a divinely appointed saviour of *dharma* which for him meant primarily the faith enunciated and promulgated by Nanak and cherished and defended by his eight successors. He had by now discovered himself.

Guru Gobind Singh's problem was to defend the claims of conscience against any external interference, with the aid of arms if necessary. For this purpose, he had first to 'purify' the *panth*. The lukewarm or self-interested disciples and the disloyal or corrupt *masands* must not interfere with the cause of righteousness. The institution of the Khalsa on the Baisakhi of 1699 linked the Sikhs directly with the Guru and no longer through the undesirable mediacy of the *masands*. The baptism of the double-edged sword demanded the sacrifice of personal interests for the cause of the corporate Khalsa. The wearing of *keshas* and arms, the rejection of some old customs and the adoption of some new, the strong belief in the uniqueness of the faith of the Khalsa — all made for the sharpening of a distinct socio-religious entity of the Khalsa, and its consciousness among them. They could not be ignored by their neighbours.

Guru Gobind Singh's old antagonist, the Chief of Bilaspur, could not idly watch the growing numbers of the Khalsa who appeared to threaten not only his jealously guarded temporal authority but also the integrity of his ancient dominions. With the help of some neighbouring Chiefs, he demanded the evacuation of Anandpur. It took them four years successfully to enforce this demand and that too with the aid of their suzerain, the Mughal Emperor, Aurangzib. But to Guru Gobind Singh, their success cost not only his 'home' but also the life of many a devoted Khalsa, the lives of all his four sons and his mother. The severest blow had now fallen on him and the year 1705 opened with the most critical days of his life when he was wandering almost alone from place to place with no one to depend upon except his God.

Guru Gobind Singh's response to this hopeless situation brings out the essential traits of his character and personality. He re-established his contact with the Khalsa, continued to baptise the Sikhs, defended himself against the arms of Wazir Khan, the *faujdar* of Sarhind, prepared a new recension of the *Adi Granth*, and wrote a dignified letter to Aurangzib taking a firm stand on moral grounds, and demanding moral justice. Guru Gobind Singh's 'friendly' relations with the Mughal Emperors, Aurangzib and Bahadur Shah, which have puzzled a number of historians, meant no more than this : that Guru Gobind Singh wished the Emperors to come to a lasting understanding on his own modest terms which implied the restoration of his 'home', Anandpur, to him as well as the freedom to continue with his religious mission. Quite in harmony with his basic position, the last two years of his life were spent, among other things, in ensuring the claims of conscience without resorting to arms. The issue was still unresolved when Guru Gobind Singh died at Nander in October, 1708, leaving the Khalsa to trust God and to trust themselves.

The immediate followers of Guru Gobind Singh refused to acknowledge the authority of a state which had denied moral justice to their Guru. The conflict which now ensued proved eventually to be the death-knell of Mughal authority in the Punjab where the Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh established their sovereign power and, in loving gratitude, they attributed their sovereignty to the grace of God and their Guru, Gobind Singh.

This, in very brief, was the life and mission of the subject of this biographical study and I may close by quoting the authors whose vocabulary I have freely borrowed in the foregoing paragraphs :

> For the majority of his contemporaries, Guru Gobind Singh died an obscure death. To those

who have tried to look upon his life as simply a long round of unsuccessful political struggle and personal misfortune, he died a defeated man. Nothing could be more mistaken. Gobind had achieved one victory; he had made himself master of the imagination of his followers. If in his life-time the Sikh was identified with the Khalsa, soon after his death the Khalsa was identified with the Singh. And the Singhs have belonged to the central stream of Sikh history ever since the death of Guru Gobind Singh.

I am grateful to Dr. J. S. Grewal and to Dr. S. S. Bal for having undertaken this work on behalf of the Department of History, Panjab University, Chandigarh; and I congratulate them for having accomplished so much in so short a time.

R. R. Sethi
Professor of History,
Panjab University,
Chandigarh.

Preface

We are thankful to Shri Suraj Bhan, Vice-Chancellor, Panjab University, Chandigarh, for giving us the opportunity of studying a subject which had engaged our interest for a number of years. We are indebted to Professor R. R. Sethi, Head of the Department of History, for his anxious interest in this work, and for his complimentary foreword.

Though sure of our interest in the subject, we are not sure of our competence to treat it in a manner which may meet the approval both of the historian and the general reader. Our chief limitation has been the shortage of time. In a little over six months, we had to collect and interpret the material relevant for this biography, to draft and re-draft the presentation of our findings and to send the type-script to the Press. We are highly indebted to our predecessors in the field whose work has served as a guide to our own researches, particularly in the initial stages.

However, we do not always find ourselves in agreement with them on many an important point. We are conscious that quite often we are dealing with probabilities, inevitably because of the nature of the evidence available to us. But, as far as we are aware, we have not taken any liberties in the interpretation of that evidence.

This short biography is in the nature of a tentative presentation of Guru Gobind Singh's life and mission. We are certainly hopeful that a better account of the subject is possible on the basis of a thorough examination even of the known available evidence. If we are publishing the results of our investigation at this stage, it is only because of the demands of the occasion. Our only claim to credit might be our attempt at discovering the historical Guru Gobind Singh and our only claim to merit might be the honesty of that purpose. That we regard Guru Gobind Singh as a great historical figure would be evident from our presentation of his life and mission.

Several institutions and individuals have been helpful to us in the preparation of this monograph. The Panjab University Library, Chandigarh, the Panjab State Archives, Patiala, Sikh History Research Library, Khalsa College, Amritsar, Guru Ram Das Library and Sikh Research Centre, Darbar Sahib, Amritsar, the National Archives of India and the Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi, may be specifically mentioned.

We are indebted to Dr. M. S. Randhawa, at present the Chief Commissioner of Chandigarh, S. Sujan Singh, Registrar, Panjab University, Chandigarh, S. Bishan Singh, Principal, Khalsa College, Amritsar, S. Jagjit Singh, Principal, Sikh National College, Qadian (Gurdaspur) and Dr. Ganda Singh, formerly the Director of Punjab Historical Studies, Punjabi University, Patiala, for their encouraging interest in this work. From Dr. M. S. Randhawa has come the most tangible help and three 'portraits' are being published in this work through his courtesy.

Professor Gurdev Singh Gosal, Head of the Department of Geography, and Dr. B. N. Goswamy, Head of the Department of Fine arts, Panjab University, Chandigarh, have extended to us a most kind and consistent co-operation in the preparation of this monograph. We are equally indebted to Professor S. S. Kohli, Head of the Department of Panjabi, Dr. Bakhshish Singh Nijjar of the Punjab State Archives, Patiala, Mr. Joginder Singh of the Panjab University Library, and Mr. R. N. Seth, Reader in English, Evening College, Panjab University, Chandigarh.

Miss Tripta Wahi, a U. G. C. Research Scholar in our Department, has given to us a very enthusiastic co-operation for this work in all the stages of its preparation. We are indebted to our student, Gurtej Singh, for his active help; and a photograph of Anandpur (Keshgarh Sahib) is being produced here through his courtesy. Mr. O. P. Sarna of the Department of Geography, Panjab University, Chandigarh, has drawn all the maps which we have prepared for this monograph., and the Genealogical Table. We are happy to acknowledge the occasional help which Dr. S.P. Sangar, Reader in History in our Deparment, Mr. D. L. Diwan, our Research Scholar, Mr. J. L. Mehta, our Research Fellow, Mr. Raja Ram, our student, and Miss Indu Banga, our research student, and Mr. D. L. Datta of the Panjab University Evening College,Chandigarh, have given to us.

Mr. P. N. Vaid of the Department of History has typed out the entire manuscript of this work.

We are thankful to Mr. S. Balasundaram, Manager, Masha'l Printing Press, Kharar, for his commendable cooperation.

December 22, 1966. J. S. Grewal & S. S. Bal
Department of History,
Panjab University,
Chandigarh.

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I

Introductory

To bring out the significance of Guru Gobind Singh's life and mission, it is of course necessary to study him in the context of his times. For the purpose of this short biography only a broad outline, and that too of the important aspects, of that context may be given. The most relevant aspects of Guru Gobind Singh's historical situation appear to be the general framework of the Mughal Empire with its administrative arrangements in the north western parts, the socio-political life in the Punjab Hill States, and the Sikh heritage of Guru Gobind Singh.

Babur had professed legitimately to claim Delhi as an ancestral inheritance from Timur; and the political struggle that ensued between the Mughals and the Afghans, had terminated, albeit after many vicissitudes, in favour of Babur's successors. In due course, they came to interpret 'Delhi' as the Sultanate of Delhi in its palmiest days under the Khaljis and the Tughluqs. The Mughal claims could be supported with the use of cannon, something unknown to their predecessors in India. The ancient limits of the Sultanate under its Turkish founders were soon surpassed in the reign of Akbar; and, having come to a satisfactory political compromise in Rajasthan — which proved to be more effective than the relatively high handed dealings of the Sultans with the Rajputs, he could think of southward expansion at the eost of the successor States to the Empire of Muhammad ibn Tughluq. Within a century of Akbar's death, nearly the whole of India was more or less unified under the Mughal Crown.

Purely in political terms, India under the Mughals was more unified than ever before. The rich and fertile plains were brought under the direct control of the Mughal Government and its influence was extended over the relatively inacessible or infertile tracts. The introduction of a more uniform system of administrative and diplomatic procedures enabled the Mughal Government to introduce also a greater control or influence over the far and near provinces of the Empire and the territories of the vassals. The degree of control depended on various factors — the mode of subjugation, distance, from the main centres of power, regional traditions, for example; but the crust of the Crown's supremacy enveloped the whole political and administrative set up, and only those areas of public life remained untouched which did not affect either the power and authority or the coffers of the Mughal Emperors

The significance of the Mughal *mansabdari* system for the consolidation of the Mughal Empire is as much worthy of note as the use of cannon by the Mughals in their wars and sieges. The *mansabdari* system enabled the Crown to enlist the services and co-operation of competent or ambitious men without any reference to their personal beliefs, and in subordination to the Crown. Even the Mughal princes and former Chiefs could become the servants of the Mughal State. The division and sub-division of the Empire into administrative units under the graded *mansabdars* with prescribed duties of their offices strengthened the control of the central Government; and its ability to know what was happening in the various parts of the Empire was not simply a question of checks and balances but also a measure of its increased control. The Mughal Government became 'a paper Government' largely because all its departments were more or less institutionalised. Much of this was made possible by the *mansabdari* system which was a political and an administrative as well as a military instrument.

However, the extension and elaboration of the *mansabdari* system under Akbar's successors put a great strain on the economic resources of the Mughal Empire. The revenues from land had formed the back-bone of the Mughal financial system; but there was an optimum limit to agricultural yield and production; and as the financial commitments of the Mughal Government went on increasing, it became more and more difficult for the *mansabdars* to receive from the agrarian economy what they believed was due to them. In the latter half of Aurangzib's reign, the financial needs of the Mughal Government could not be easily met with its available resources. Conversely, the importance of land revenues to the Mughal Government went on increasing.

Consequently, the maintenance of peace and order in the Empire of Aurangzib became more important than it was ever before. The Emperor often felt obliged to give a good deal of his personal attention to the detail of administration, the revenue administration in particular. This trait in his character need not be ascribed simply to his suspecting nature : he knew what was at stake. In being frankly expansionist, Aurangzib was not different from his predecessors; but he was also aware that the success of his policy depended ultimately on the peace and order in his dominions which alone could ensure the sinews of war. If the Mughal Emperors had been generally jealous of their Imperial power and authority, Aurangzib had even greater reason for being so.

Indeed, the problems of peace and order in the Empire of Aurangzib were becoming more and more complex. The various peoples of the Mughal

Empire were more or less united in their allegiance to the State; but, socially and culturally, they did not form a homogeneous whole. The socio-cultural plurality was marked particularly by the dividing lines between the Muslims and non-Muslims. In so far as the activities of the State touched the life of the various peoples, this situation was bound to create difficult problems for any ruler. The power and authority of the Sultans of Delhi had been based essentially on their physical force buttressed by the consensus of opinion chiefly among the Muslims; and, though the practice of the Sultans could often be very much different, they had professed in theory to rule by and large on behalf of the Muslims and for them. The non-Muslims had been given practically no share in the vital politics of the Sultanate; but they had also been mostly left alone, provided they did not presume to thwart the Sultan's power and authority and paid to the Sultanate what was due to it. Consequently, large areas of the life of non-Muslims in the greater part of the Sultanate had remained untouched by the State.

Akbar had attempted to substitute the old theory with a new one of his own, which harmonized better with his practice. He had professed to be the sovereign of all the various peoples of his Empire : the Muslims and non-Muslims became alike in being equally subservient to the State. They were also alike in being entitled to a share in political and economic advantages. Not only had the *jiziya* been officially abolished, an active patronage had been extended to some of the non-Muslim religious establishments. But this new conception and practice of the State had not been acceptable to all the contemporary Muslims for two fundamental reasons : the sanctity of orthodox political theory appeared to some to have been seriously challenged, if not flouted; and the traditional balance in favour of the Muslims as the privileged subjects of a Muslim State appeared to have been upset. Their reaction to the liberalization of state policies could not be ignored, because the Muslims were still predominant in the politics and Government of the Mughal Empire. To alienate their sympathies and support was even more difficult than those of any other group of people.

The difficulty had been accentuated by the revivalist movement which had appeared in India by the close of the sixteenth century; and was influencing the attitudes and opinions of a considerable number of Muslims in favour of the reaction. Jahangir and Shah Jahan had made some important concessions to the orthodoxy; and Aurangzib took its support more seriously than his predecessors, partly because the question of sharing the economic advantages in the administration of the Mughal Empire was becoming more and more serious but largely because of his own temperament which was in harmony with the revivalist movement itself. He was not loath to take even repressive measures against the non-Muslims. But that created complications of its own. For more than half a century, the non-Muslims in the Mughal Empire had enjoyed its benevolent patronage in and outside the sphere of politics and administration. The concessions once made could not be revoked without alienating the sympathies of those whose sentiments or interests were adversely touched. His repressive measures could be resented particularly by the new socio-religious groups which had come into existence in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and which actively inculcated the equality of their faith with any other in the world.

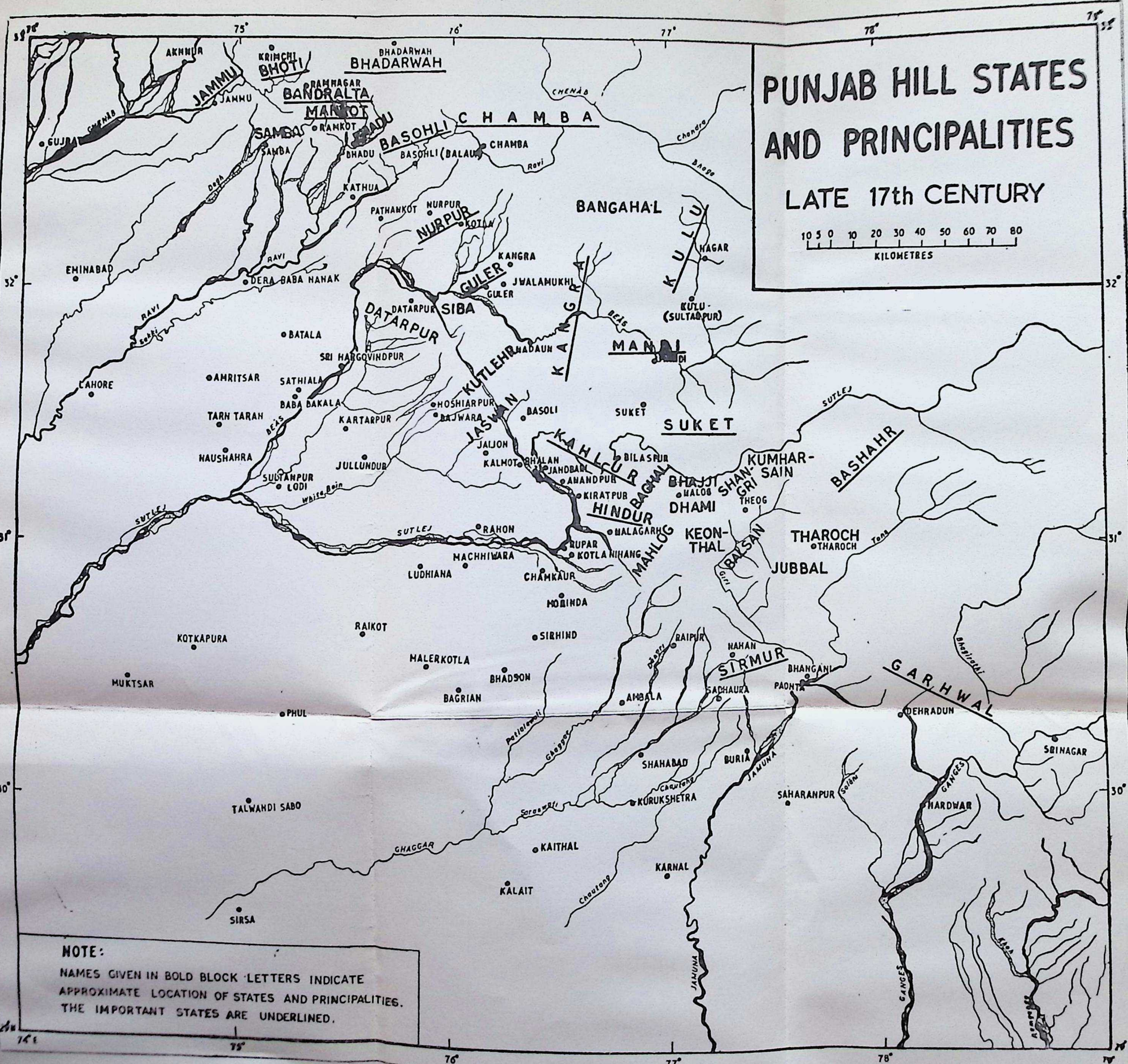
The north western parts of Aurangzib's Empire were important to him in several ways. Of all the frontiers of the Mughal Empire, the most important were the north western. The practically impassable ranges of the Himalayas, which set a natural limit to expansion, also reduced the problems of defence. The 'outlandish' Europeans on the sea-coasts, whatever the hindsight of the historians might oblige them to say about their potential danger to the Mughal Empire, were regarded by Aurangzib as no more than a serious nuisance. The north western frontiers were different. Thanks to the not very distant central Asian origins of the Mughals and their recent rivalry with the Persian Safavis, Akbar's successors could not but pay a serious attention to the north west. Aurangzib as a prince had led the Mughal troops into Balkh; and the loss of Qandhar was fresh in his memory. Within the frontiers, the Afghan tribal leaders had given him enough trouble.

The peace in the north west was also desirable for economic reasons, for the safe passage of trade *caravans*. Moreover the province of Lahore, which formed a second line of defence or offence was important for its productivity. All the five of its *doabs* brought rich revenues to the Mughal Empire. In the 1690's, for instance, the revenues from the province of Lahore amounted to over two crores of rupees which formed nearly a tenth of the total land revenues of the Mughal Government at that time. There were several flourishing towns and cities which were important centres of learning and trade, besides being the administrative centres.

Between Lahore and Delhi, Sarhind was probably the most important town. In fact, Khafi Khan called it 'a city', which was full of rich merchants, prosperous bankers, wealthy craftsmen, and respectable persons of every class, particularly the learned.[2] The *naqshbandi* Shaikh Ahmad, the *mujjaddid-i-alif-i-sani* who had spear-headed a revivalist movement during the reigns of Akbar and Jahangir, had been a resident of Sarhind; and [his spiritual successors were probably still there. Sarhind was the chief town of a large Sarkar which annually brought in fifty lakhs of rupees in land revenue. The *faujdars* of Sarhind, some of whom came to be called the *nawabs* by the later chroniclers, were usually the *mansabars* of high rank. They were supposed to maintain peace and order in the Sarkar of Sarhind and to aid the Mughal officials dealing with the adjoining Hill States. This last function was not the least important, because there was no other important *faujdari* between Kangra and Bareilly to cope with the politics of the Himalayas.

The medieval principalities of the Punjab Himalayas are conventionally divided into three groups. About a dozen small Muslim principalities between the Indus and the Jhelum under the hegemony of Kashmir, formed the western group. The central group between the Jhelum and the Ravi consisted of a score of small states and principalities of which Jammu was the most important and which included Basohli and Jasrota. Between the Ravi and the Sutlej was the eastern group of states consisting chiefly of Kangra, Kulu, Mandi, Suket, Chamba, Nurpur, Guler, Datarpur, Siba, Jaswan and Kutlehr. There was however yet another important group of states and principalities between the Sutlej and the Jumna, which included Kahlur (Bilaspur) on both the sides of the Sutlej, Sirmur (Nahan) and Hindur (Nalagarh.) On the east of the Jumna was the state of Garhwal which, strictly speaking, did not belong to the Punjab Hill States. Some of these states had been founded only a century or two earlier, but many more could claim an antiquity ranging from three or four centuries to over a thousand years. All the Hill Chiefs between the Jumna and the Ravi regarded themselves as Rajput and the common bonds of religion and custom further strengthened their consciousness of social homogeneity in these inaccessible hills.

The Punjab Hill States had come to form an integral part of the Imperial complex. The Raja of Kahlur (Bilaspur) had already accepted Babur's suzerainty. But, it was during the reign of Akbar that a serious attention was paid to the Punjab Hills. In the words ascribed to Todar Mal, he had 'cut off the meat and left the bone': the fertile portions of Kangra valley were annexed to the Mughal Empire. That a large number of the Hill Rajas had accepted Akbar's supremacy is evident from Zain Khan Koka's expedition against the rebellious '*zamindars*' of the hills in 1591: Bidhi Chand of Nagarkot was quick to offer tribute; and he was not alone, for he was joined by Paras Ram of Jammu, Basu of Mau, Anirudh of Jaswan, Tela of Kahlur, Jagdish Chand of Guler, Sempal Chand of Dadwal, Sansar Chand of Siba, Pratap of Mankot, Bhanwar of Jasrota, Balbhadra of Lakhanpur, Daulat of Sher Kot Bharata, Krishan of Bhela, Narain of Haskant,



PUNJAB HILL STATES AND PRINCIPALITIES

LATE 17th CENTURY

NOTE:

NAMES GIVEN IN BOLD BLOCK LETTERS INDICATE APPROXIMATE LOCATION OF STATES AND PRINCIPALITIES. THE IMPORTANT STATES ARE UNDERLINED.

10 5 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80
KILOMETRES
75°
76°
77°
78°
32°
31°
30°
AKHNUR
KRIMCHI
BHOTI
BHADARWAH
BHADARWAH
JAMMU
JAMMU
RAMNAGAR
BANDRALTA
MANKOT
BHADU
GUJRAT
CHENAB
SAMBA
SAMBA
RAMKOT
BHADU
BASOHLI
BASOHLI (BALAUR)
CHAMBA
CHAMBA
CHENAB
Chandra
Bhaga
Ravi
KATHUA
PATHANKOT
NURPUR
NURPUR
KOTLA
BANGAHAL
KULU
NAGAR
KANGRA
JWALAMUKHI
GULER
GULER
EMINABAD
RAVI
DERA BABA NANAK
DATARPUR
DATARPUR
SIBA
KANGRA
BEAS
KULU (SULTANPUR)
BATALA
SRI HARGOVINDPUR
HADAUN
KUTLEHR
MANDI
MANDI
AMRITSAR
LAHORE
SATHIALA
BABA BAKALA
HOSHIARPUR
BAJWARA
JASWAN
BASOLI
SUKET
SUKET
TARN TARAN
BEAS
KARTARPUR
JAIJON
KAHLUR
BILASPUR
KUMHARSAIN
BASHAHR
NAUSHAHRA
JULLUNDUR
KALMOT
BHALAN
JANDBARI
ANANDPUR
BAGHAL
BHAJJI
MALOG
SHANGRI
THEOG
SULTANPUR LODI
White Bein
KIRATPUR
HINDUR
DHAMI
SUTLEJ
SUTLEJ
RAHON
NALAGARH
KEONTHAL
BALSAN
THAROCH
THAROCH
Tons
RUPAR
KOTLA NIHANG
MAHLOG
JUBBAL
MACHHIWARA
LUDHIANA
CHAMKAUR
Giri
MORINDA
RAIKOT
KOTKAPURA
SIRHIND
RAIPUR
NAHAN
SIRMUR
MALERKOTLA
BHADSON
BHANGANI
PAONTA
GARHWAL
MUKTSAR
BAGRIAN
AMBALA
SADHAURA
DEHRADUN
PHUL
Patialawali
Ghaggar
Bhagirathi
SRINAGAR
SHAHABAD
BURIA
JAMUNA
GANGES
Chautang
SAHARANPUR
Solani
HARDWAR
TALWANDI SABO
KURUKSHETRA
Saraswati
GHAGGAR
KAITHAL
KARNAL
KALAIT
Chautang
SIRSA
JAMUNA
GANGES
Ramganga

Krishan of Balaur and Udiya of Dhameri.[3] Though the occupation of the Kangra fort was reserved for Jahangir's boast, Mughal suzerainty had been extended over most of the Punjab Hill States by the end of the sixteenth century. Mughal control or influence in these regions had been inspired primarily by political motives; and it was sought to be imposed through the establishment of *faujdaris* in the territories annexed from the Hill States. The *faujdars* of Jammu and Kangra were very probably privileged to have direct access to the central Government; and the provincial governors were perhaps instructed to go to the aid of those important *faujdars*, if and when that was needed. That could enable the *faujdars* to remain at a striking distance from the vassal Hill Chiefs to deal with them effectively.

The paramount control of the Mughals over the Punjab Hill States was greater than that of the Sultans of Delhi. All the Chiefs had to pay an annual tribute which, though not very considerable, could become irksome to the Chiefs who might be inclined towards defiance and which could become important also to the suzerain with the increasing financial commitments of the Mughal Empire. At times, the Mughal Emperors actually exercised the right to ratify the succession to the *gaddi* of a principality. The vassal Chiefs were virtually denied the right to mint any coinage of their own. It may not be out of place to remark that, though no such conditions were imposed by the sovereign power, some of the Chiefs of their own accord could try to assimilate their administration to that of the Mughals.

The use of physical force was not the only means through which the Mughal sovereigns sought to ensure the fidelity of the Hill Chiefs. A prince or a close relative of the ruling Chief could be retained as a hostage at the Mughal Court; or, the Chief himself could be given a *mansab* and taken into Imperial service. Some of them were given high *mansabs* and served the Mughal Empire in the distant regions of the Deccan, Kabul and Qandhar and even in Balkh and Badakhshan. They were favoured in turn by the Mughal Emperors. In fact, the great prominence of the principalities of Nurpur and Guler during the period of Mughal ascendancy may be explained in terms of the close association of their Chiefs with the Mughal Government. They gained at the cost chiefly of the ancient house of Kangra.

Revolts of the Hill Chiefs against their suzerain were not infrequent. Inspired perhaps by the memory of proud independence in the past and some hope of a political advantage in the present, they were encouraged by the strength of their mountain fortresses to defy the Mughals-[4] Combinations against the Mughal *faujdars* were not unknown but the rebels could often be brought back to their allegiance with the help of the loyal Hill Chiefs themselves.

However, so long as they acknowledged the supremacy of the Mughals, the prerogatives of the tributary Chiefs were not questioned: there was no interference in their internal affairs. Though the recalcitrant among them were at times severely punished, by and large the Punjab Hill Chiefs appear to have received a liberal treatment from the Emperors throughout the period of Mughal supremacy.

The Imperial authority sat rather lightly on the Hill Chiefs. Autonomous in the internal administration of their principalities, they were allowed to act as almost independent rulers in their relations to one another. They could build forts and wage war on each other without any reference to the sovereign power. But the one who was worsted was not loath to appeal to the Mughal Emperor for redress. Now as before, the history of the Hill Chiefs was one of a continual warfare. The close geographical proximity of their principalities, the uncertain boundaries, the fierceness of passions — all made for this continual warfare; but, more often than not, the Chiefs had also an eye on political advantage. They appear to have regarded warfare as a serious and an advantageous sport. There were transitory alliances and frequent shifts in friendly or hostile relations. Long standing family feuds were not wholly unknown: in Chamba, for instance, Basohli and Nurpur were never named directly. But, on the whole there was a curious combination of enmity and alliance that followed no rigid pattern; and these feuds often cut across clannish or matrimonial ties. With a strong sense of political realities, the Chiefs generally fought for minor advantages and were considerate of each other's rights. Their wars did not lead to any important political changes.

The mode as well as the temper of warfare in the hills did not deeply affect the life of the people. The profession of arms was confined to the Rajputs, who held all political power in their hands but who did not form any large proportion of the total population. The proportion of the Brahmans was much higher and their influence at the courts, in the administration and over the people at large was very considerable; but fighting was none of their business. They in fact upheld 'the tyranny of caste rules'; and the agricultural Rathi and the semi-nomadic Gujjar, who formed a large proportion of the population, were always left out of politics and generally out of warfare. The limited resources of the Chiefs did not permit the maintenance of large standing armies. The physiognomy of their principalities did not encourage the use of cavalry; and though the use of cannon was not unknown to the Hill Chiefs, it remained unadopted. Their soldiers mostly fought on foot and with simple weapons — the bow, the sword or the spear. The loss of life in their warfare was not very large and was made up perhaps by the natural growth in the population of the fighting class. The bulk of the population were generally left free to their pursuit of toilsome hereditary occupations, punctuated by seasonal public festivals which most of them attended with a religious regularity.

Religion was the very essence of existence for the man in the hill; and the roots of religion were many and strong and deep. The prestige and power of the Brahmans sprang, indirectly or directly, from the religious sentiments of the people and the princes. The Chiefs generally entertained or displayed a strongly religious sentiment. The innumerable temples and shrines that dotted the sparsely populated hills were so many tokens of the religious beliefs, feelings and sentiments of the hill people. More than anything else, religion provided the cementing force for the society in the hills; and hedged its princes with the halo of divinity.

Only a few relevant aspects of religion in the hills may be noted here. Many important temples were dedicated to Mahadeva, and Shaiva shrines were numerous in the hills. The dominant religion in the hills was indeed Shaivism. Puranic literature was widely read. The worship of the Goddess in her several aspects and forms — Ums, Shyama, Kumari, Shakti, Bhavani, Chandi and Kali — was very popular; and she was worshipped mostly in her terrible and malignant form. She was the family deity of the proudest of hill Rajputs, the Katoches of a thousand years' name. The recitation of *Durga Sapta Sati* was especially esteemed for ensuring safe return from a long journey. The *Tantras* too, with their cult of the five *makaras* — wine, flesh, fish, parched grain and sexual intercourse; were quite popular; and a sizable proportion of the people appear to have belonged to this sect of the Devi worshippers. At a popular level, the worship of many minor gods was quite, common. The sacrifice of animals — goats, cocks, buffaloes, at the shrines of Shaiva and Shakta deities was not uncommon.

Vaishnavism was not unknown in the hills, which might be taken as an indication of the contact of the hillmen with the plains-men. Indeed, contact with the outside world was not unknown even before the hills were brought into the vortex of the Mughal Empire. That contact had become closer now. The princes and people of the hills visited many parts of India, the places of Hindu pilgrimage in particular – Hardwar, Kurukshetra, Gaya, Jagannath, Badrinath, Kidarnath, Godavari, for instance; and *pandits* or pilgrims from all parts of India could come to the courts of the Hill Chiefs or to Jwalamukhi and other places sacred to the Goddess. The learned Brahmans of Kashmir and Banaras were always welcome to the Punjab Hill States. Though Sanskrit was still the language of the learned, vernacular was coming into vogue during the latter half of the seventeenth century; and soon the works of Bhushan, Keshodas and Tulsidas were imported from the plains. In fact, all the religious and literary texts to be found all over the hills had been imported at one time or the other from the plains.

The Vaishnava *bairagis* had approached the hills in the late sixteenth century. The Pandori *gaddi* (near Gurdaspur) was established probably in 1572 and the Chiefs of Guler and Nurpur associated themselves with the *bairagis* in the early seventeenth century. By 1648, Raja Suraj Sen of Mandi had introduced Vaishnavism to his capital; and the foundation of Nahan and its founder, Raja Karam Parkash, are both associated with the *bairagi* named Banwari Dass. Temples dedicated to Vishnu and to Ram and Sita were erected in Kangra and Chamba by the Chiefs of those principalities in the seventeenth century. It is worth noting however, that the 'new' faith was introduced and patronized only by the Chiefs. A desperate resistance was put up by the adherents of the 'old' faith. The *bairagis* of Paṇdori, for instance, were attacked by the *gosains*; and biting satires on the Vaishnavas, in two extant drawings, may indicate the general attitude of the people towards the 'new' faith.

The society in the Punjab Hill States was in its own way a fairly sophisticated society and it was very conservative. The whole social structure was deeply rooted in the past and was sanctioned by the political power of the Rajputs and the religious authority of the Brahmans. Some caste mobility was in evidence, now as before; but the 'tyranny of caste' too was as strong as ever. There was great respect for tradition, privilege and authority. The Punjab Hill States thus formed in a sense 'the greatest stronghold of Hinduism'.

The foundations of Sikhism had been laid contemporaneously with the advent of Mughal rule in India. By 1526 A.D., Guru Nanak had already come into contact with almost all shades of Hindu and Muslim belief and nearly all the varieties of contemporary religious practice; and after a long spiritual struggle, he had evolved a distinctive path for himself and his followers, the Sikhs. They were to believe in the One God, the Eternal Truth. They were to sing His praises in utter humility and devotion through the Guru's word, the *gurbani* or the hymns composed by Nanak himself. In supersession of all other beliefs and practices, men and women of all castes and creeds were invited to believe in Nanak's message which, in his own eyes, had been sanctified by divine sanction. It is possible to argue that Nanak's attitudes and beliefs were catholic and eclectic, but to stop at that would be to miss the core of his message : its uniqueness, at least for those who believed in it.

The sanctity which Nanak had assumed for his distinctive role came to be associated also with his nominated successor and, in turn, with his other successors, in all of whom thus appeared to shine the light of Nanak. Indeed in the belief of his disciples, as Muhsin Fani observed a century later, all the Gurus were Nanak.[5] Their word or *bani* commanded the same respect and veneration as Nanak's. The first four successors of Nanak had composed hymns which read more or less like variations on the themes chosen by him for the edification of his disciples. By 1604 A.D., the *gurbani* together with the *bani* of several *bhaktas* had been compiled into a *granth* by the fifth Nanak, Guru Arjan, and became almost a Scripture for the Sikhs who had little to do with Sanskrit, 'the language of gods, according to the Hindus'.[6]

The compilation of the *Granth* had come significantly at a time when the Sikh *sangats* were multiplying in and outside the Punjab. The *sangat* was another legacy of Nanak. Around 1526 A.D., he had settled down at Kartarpur (the present Dera Baba Nanak) where all the disciples used to hold congregational recitation of Nanak's hymns, and to dine in the community kitchen called the *langar* which was maintained through voluntary contribution and service. The Guru's *sangat* and the *langar* had moved to Khadur and Goindwal in the present Amritsar district and eventually to Chak Guru or Amritsar itself, while local *sangats* came into existence at several other places. Already, in the time of Guru Amardas (1552–74) respectable Sikhs had been appointed to cater to the spiritual needs of the regional *sangats*, to act as the missionaries of Sikhism and, as the Guru's representatives, to collect the voluntary offerings from the Sikhs. By the time of Guru Arjan (1574–1606), these arrangements had been elaborated and strengthened through the agency of the *masands* who managed the affairs of several local *sangats*. In the words of Muhsin Fani, the number of the Sikhs had been increasing during every pontificate and by the time of Guru Arjan Mal, they had become really numerous: there were not many cities in the inhabitable lands in which some Sikhs were not to be found.

At the centre of this well-organised Sikh *panth* was of course the Guru to whom the Sikhs were bound by the tenuous yet strong bond of faith and devotion. The sanctity which was attached to the person, and more so to the office, of the Guru at once encouraged and justified even the greatest personal sacrifice for him by a disciple. One has only to peruse the compositions of the Gurus, and of Bhai Gurdas, to realize how assiduously the ideal of devotion was cherished and cultivated; and sympathetic contemporary observers from outside the *panth* were touched by the practical demonstration of the Sikh's devotion to his Guru in matters ranging from the ludicrous to the sublime. Jhanda, a rich disciple of Guru Hargobind could go to collect firewood for the *langar* when 'the Sikhs' in general were to be reminded to do so; and he could go without shoes for three months because the Guru had suggested their temporary removal to relieve a sore foot. Another Sikh, Sadh, could leave his dying son at home to go to Balkh for purchasing horses for Guru Hargobind. On Guru Hargobind's death, when his body was placed on the funeral pyre, a Rajput named Raja Ram walked literally through fire to place his forehead on the Guru's feet and calmly to give up his life there; a young Jat jumped into the fire to die with the Guru; and a large number of Sikhs had to be forbidden by Guru Har Rai to follow the Rajput's or the Jat's example[8].

The self-sacrificing devotion of the ideal Sikh was matched by the Guru's deep concern and esteem for him. The Guru's care for his devoted Sikhs was compared by Guru Ramdas with the mother's care for a new-born baby[9]. When a Sikh asked Guru Hargobind how he could find the Guru when he was away from the Guru, he was told to regard every Sikh who came to his house as the Guru himself.[10] This mutual regard of the Guru and the Sikh could strengthen among the Sikhs the bond of brotherhood which arose primarily from their allegiance to a common faith. Any person who went to a Sikh's house in the Guru's name was always welcome, even if he were a thief.[11] The Sikh *sangat* was even more venerable than the individual Sikh. The sanctity of the *sangat* was reflected in the Sikh custom of offering collective prayers in behalf of the individual; and the Guru was no exception to this.[12] Bhai Gurdas, the great spokesman of both the Sikhs and their Gurus, could say in one of his frequently quoted verses: where there was one Sikh, there was just one; where there were two Sikhs, there was the company of saints; and where there were five, there was God.[13]

By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Sikhs had become conscious of their distinctive socio-religious identity. Though Guru Nanak's message was delivered primarily in religious terms, it had some important social implications. The differences of caste and creed were irrelevant for the acceptance of Nanak's way to salvation; and the acceptance of that path tended to minimize caste distinctions among his followers. In the *sangat* and the *langar*, for instance, all met as equals; and since the obligation of earning his living was imposed on every Sikh, there was no sacerdotal class in the Sikh *panth* and all honest professions from manual labour to kingship were equally dignified. The voluntary contributions in cash, kind or service made by the Sikhs towards the resources of their Gurus enabled the latter to undertake the construction of wells, tanks and temples and, coupled with their increasing popularity, to found new townships. The places associated with the Gurus, notably Amritsar, became the places of pilgrimage for the Sikhs. The consciousness of a distinct religious identity resulted in the adoption of some new customs and ceremonies which underlined the social differences between the Sikhs and their contemporaries. This social differentiation brought in external pressure which obliged the Sikhs to close their ranks and become acutely conscious of their 'brotherhood'. The *vars* of Bhai Gurdas may be interpreted not only in terms of his exposition of Sikhism but also in terms of the uniqueness of Guru Nanak's message and of the distinct socio-religious entity of the Sikhs for Bhai Gurdas.

The Sikh *panth* appeared to be a distinct socio-religious group even to the outside observers. The very inclusion of the *Nanak-panthis* in the *Dabistan-i- Mazahib* is indicative of this. Some of Muhsin Fani's observations are significant from this standpoint.[14] According to him, Nanak had believed in the oneness of God and the *Nanak-panthis* did not recite the *mantras* of the Hindus; the *avatars* did not weigh with the Sikhs any more; and they had little to do with the language of Hindu scriptures. Among the Sikhs, there was no restriction on a Brahman becoming the disciple of a Khatri, or on a Khatri becoming subordinate to a Jat (who would certainly be a Vaisha). Indeed, many of the Brahman and Khatri Sikhs were attached to the Jat *masands* who mediated between them and the Guru. There was none of the Hindu ceremonies or practices among the Sikhs and none of the restrictions on eating and drinking. Since the Sikhs were required not to renounce the world, they were mostly agriculturists, traders and salaried servants.

Among the Sikhs, the consciousness of belonging to a distinct socio-religious group did not imply any hostility towards the members of other socio-religious groups. Even Bhai Gurdas, who boldly underlined the supersession of Islam and Hinduism by the religion of Nanak and upheld the superiority of Sikh belief and practice over all others, advised the Sikhs to hold fast to their faith without being contemptuous of others. He looked upon the Hindus and Muslims as the misguided progeny of one and the same Father and expected them to recognize their essential brotherhood by coming into the fold of Sikhism in which hostility towards men of other creeds ceased all at once. The instrument of conversion to Sikhism was not pressure, not even persuasion so much as the exemplary life of the Sikhs themselves.

Sujan Rai Bhandari's observation in this connection is worth noting.[15]

In short, many of the followers of Baba Nanak are abstemious, soft-spoken, men of ecstatic

> delight in the contemplation of God and their prayers are efficacious. Their essential worship consists in the study of their *murshid's* verses which they also recite melodiously in pleasing tunes, using musical instruments. They have purified their hearts from worldly affections and attachments and have thus cast away the dark veil of impediments. In their eyes, kinsmen and strangers, friends and foes, are all alike; they live in harmony with their friends, and without a quarrel with their enemies. The faith which they have in their Guide is seldom to be seen among any other religious group. In their *murshid's* name, which is constantly on their lips, they serve the wayfarers, regarding it a way of worshipping God. If a person arrives at mid-night in Baba Nanak's name, he is properly served by the Sikhs though he may totally be a stranger — he may even be a thief, a highway-man or a bad character of any other description.

With the willing acceptance of the Guru's authority by the Sikhs who had come to form a closely knit socio-religious group, the Sikh *panth* had become in a sense 'a state' within the Mughal Empire. The Sikhs had no political aspirations as yet; they did not probably have even a political consciousness. Both the power and authority of the Mughal Empire was recognized and obeyed by the Sikhs. There was no clash between their allegiance to the Guru and their allegiance to the State; the choice had not yet been forced on them. Akbar in fact had extended his patronage to the Sikh Gurus as to some other non-Muslim religious establishments. But in retrospect it is possible to see that any external interference with the affairs of the Sikh Gurus and the Sikh *panth* was likely to be resented by them; and a persistent challenge to the Sikh's allegiance to his Guru could force on him the withdrawal of his allegiance to the State.

However, to make the choice was not so easy as it might appear in retrospect. In 1606 A. D., Guru Arjan was tortured to death through Jahangir's orders; and a few years later Guru Hargobind was imprisoned in the fort of Gwalior. The Sikhs must have been shocked by these unfortunate happenings but they felt helpless. Guru Hargobind adopted some new measures, probably aiming only at self-defence Even this modest attempt at 'transformation' was not appreciated by all the Sikhs. Bhai Gurdas was impelled to take notice of this crisis :[16]

> People say the former Gurus used to sit in the temple; the present Guru remaineth not in any one place.
>
> The former Emperors used to visit the former Gurus; the present Guru was sent into the fortress by the Emperor.

> In former times, the Guru's darbar could not contain the sect; the present Guru leadeth a roving life and feareth nobody.
>
> The former Gurus, sitting on their thrones, used to console the Sikhs; the present Guru keepeth dogs and hunteth.
>
> The former Gurus used to compose hymns, listen to them, and sing them; the present Guru composeth not hymns, nor listeneth to them, nor singeth them.
>
> He keepeth not his Sikh followers with him, but taketh enemies of his faith and wicked persons as his guides and familiars.
>
> I say, the truth within him cannot possibly be concealed; the true Sikhs, like the bumble-bees, are enamoured of his lotus feet.
>
> He supporteth a burden intolerable to others and asserteth not himself.

Of course there were many others who felt like Bhai Gurdas, but not all the Sikhs.

Guru Hargobind's new policy led to an armed conflict with the officials of the Mughal Government and, after gallantly fighting a few hopeless battles, he retired to the relatively inaccessible tracts in the Shiwaliks. He had chosen Kiratpur, then on the borders of Kahlur (Bilaspur), as his permanent abode on the east of the Sutlej. This place was away from the centres of Mughal administration but not from a considerable number of the Guru's followers across the Sutlej. The last ten years of his life were spent in consolidating his position within the Sikh *panth*.

An important effect of external interference was to accentuate the internal stresses in the Sikh *panth*. Guru Nanak had nominated the most devoted of his disciples to Guruship, but Nanak's son, Sri Chand had refused to accept the new Guru; and Sri Chand's followers, the Udasis, had come to form a rival religious group. Opposition from rival claimants to the nominated successors had increased after the fourth Guru, Ramdas, had nominated his successor from within the family. Prithi Chand's opposition to Guru Arjan had been more rancorous than that of Sri Chand to Guru Angad or that of Guru Angad's son to the third Guru, Amardas; and the Sikhs of Guru Arjan had condemned the followers of Prithi Chand as Minas, an epithet of reprobation.

Guru Hargobind was faced with the difficulty of choosing a successor who should command allegiance from the largest number of Sikhs. His eldest son Gurditta had died; but the younger son Dhir Mal was not very eager to have his father's blessings for Guruship. Guru Hargobind's long absence from the central Punjab had weakened his hold over the *masands* whose office was now becoming hereditary like the Guruship itself; and his policy had not met with a whole-hearted approval from all the *masands*. Dhir Mal probably felt sure about a strong support from many of the easy-going or self-interested *masands*. Guru Hargobind nominated Gurditta's son, Har Rai, to the *gaddi;* and the quiet pontificate of the young Guru Har Rai was marked by missionary work either outside the Punjab or in the cis-Sutlej area.

The alleged or real help from Har Rai to the fugitive Dara Shukoh resulted in the detention of his elder son, Ram Rai, at the court of Aurangzib. Ram Rai's conduct at the court disqualified him for Guruship in the eyes of his father; and the younger son, Har Krishan, a mere child of five or six, was nominated to the *gaddi*. This nomination was questioned by Ram Rai, and Har Krishan too was called to Delhi. Thus by 1664, both the claimants to the Guruship of the Sikh *panth* were at the Mughal court and, thanks to the divided allegiance of the self-interested *masands* and, consequently, of a large number of Sikhs, Aurangzib could presume to have a say in the matter of succession to the Guruship of the Sikh *panth*.

On Guru Har Krishan's death at Delhi in 1664, some of the Sikhs responded to the desperate situation by virtually electing the youngest son of Guru Hargobind to the Guruship. Guru Tegh Bahadur had certainly succeeded to a difficult and grave office.

II

From the Cradle to the Gaddi

Gobind was born on Saturday, the 22nd December, 1666[1], at Patna in Bihar.[2] His father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, had left the Punjab a year earlier with his entire family and had been on the move towards 'the east' when Gobind was conceived at Allahabad.[3]

Tegh Bahadur, the ninth Guru, had got the pontificate on a vague remark of his predecessor who was only nine years old at the time of his death at Delhi: Har Krishan on his deathbed had uttered 'Baba Bakala', indicating thereby the place where his successor was to be found.[4] In the absence of an unequivocal nomination of Tegh Bahadur, many others were quick to put forth their claim to Guruship. The most prominent among them was Dhir Mal.[5]

Tegh Bahadur's claim to be the Guru did not go unchallenged even at Baba Bakala where he had till then spent the major part of his life. Actually, his assumption of the 'office' at Bakala, then the headquarters of numerous Sodhis, made his life so uncomfortable[6] that he was forced to leave the place.

This was because a powerful group of *masands* around Amritsar, were, by and large, the supporters of Dhir Mal. Tegh Bahadur, perhaps believing that the latter's group would not be quite strong at Kiratpur on the Shiwaliks where the seventh and the eighth Gurus had lived in peace for long, made a move to that quarter.

If Tegh Bahadur had believed that he would have no trouble on the hills, he was soon disillusioned. Dhir Mal had his supporters at Kiratpur also and Tegh Bahadur had to begin his association with the hills by laying the foundation of a new town, later to become famous as Makhowal.[7] Within a few months Tegh Bahadur felt convinced that he would not be able to stay even in the new township and he moved out of the Punjab[8] but not before making arrangements to continue getting full information of events that were to happen in the headquarters of the earlier Gurus.[9]

When Guru Tegh Bahadur stepped out of Kiratpur, in all probability, he aimed at establishing a new headquarters temporarily at one or an other of the numerous places that had been sanctified by the visit of Nanak outside the Punjab. He appears to have taken with him enough followers to found a new centre. It must be noted that he had moved out of the Punjab with his aged mother Nanaki[10] and his wife Gujari.[11] Kripal, his devotee and his brother-in-law, also accompanied him. The Guru might well have expected the *sangats* outside the Punjab to be free from the strife then prevalent in the Sikh *panth* in the land where it had grown strong and where its leadership was for that very reason a matter of furious dispute.

After some indecision, the Guru appears to have set his mind on Dacca where there was a nucleus for his headquarters already in existence. There was a *hazuri sangat* at that place and it controlled the numerous *sangats* around.[12] By the time Guru Tegh Bahadur reached Patna, Gujari was in an advanced stage of pregnancy[13] and had to remain behind; and Mata Nanaki and Kripal had also to be left behind at Patna. Teg Bahadur felt he could safely continue his journey to Dacca because there was a prosperous *sangat* at Patna which had influential contacts with the non-Sikhs in the surrounding areas. The Guru was at Dacca when he heard the news of Gobind's birth.[14] According to the Sikh tradition, he himself suggested that the child was to be named Gobind.[15]

From Dacca Guru Tegh Bahadur went on a tour to Assam and was still there 'preaching, his mission among the Assamese' when Raja Ram Singh, the son of Mirza Raja Jai Singh arrived from Delhi with an expeditionary force directed against the Ahoms.[16] Faced with a popular rebellion that was too much for the resources with which Ram Singh had come to Assam, he found himself in a tight corner.[17] The Guru rendered the Rajput general a valuable service when he brought about an agreement between some troublesome Assamese chief and Ram Singh and saved the latter from a precarious position[18]. Perhaps believing that this must have increased his reputation even in the Punjab and the Shiwaliks, he made a confident dash to Makhowal in the hope that now he might be recognized as the undisputed Guru in the Punjab itself.[19] He passed through Patna but stayed there only for a short time and Gobind missed the loving care and affection of his father for yet another year.

Gobind had spent the first five and a half years of his life at Patna, with his father away from home. The admirers of Teg Bahadur, however, tried to see that Gobind did not feel the absence much. Shiv Dutt Pandit, who saw in the son of Tegh Bahadur 'the glory of Sri Ram Chandra and the energy of Lord Krishna', would visit Gobind and his people regularly.[20] Raja Fateh Singh Maini and his wife, perhaps believing that the birth of their son was due to Gobind's grace, doted on him[21]. From among the

Muslims, the two whose names the Sikh tradition remembers in thankful gratitude for being very helpful to Gobind in his childhood, are those of the Nawabs Rahim Bakhsh and Karim Bakhsh.[22] They are supposed to have gone to the extent of offering a garden and a village for the comfort of Gobind and his people.[23]

At Patna, the grandmother and the mother of Gobind must have vied with each other in their affections for the rapidly growing child but must have also seen to it that Gobind should not go astray from the path enjoined by the Sikh movement now eight generations old. Their influence on Gobind must have been as great as that of Kripal who managed the affairs of the Guru at Patna. It can be a safe conjecture that Mata Nanaki would tell him many a story of his great grandfather, the first martyr of Sikh history. She must have often reminded the child that he was the grandson of Hargobind who gave the concept of *Piri* and *Miri*[24] to the Sikh *panth* and was bold enough to challenge the mighty Mughals to an armed contest in the neighbourhood of Lahore itself.[25] At the same time, we can imagine Gujari telling Gobind of the pious Nanak, the devoted Angad and nurturing her only son on the philosophy of devotion to one God, implicit obedience to the Guru, and the efficacy of losing oneself in *nam dhun*. Kripal, we can be sure, kept a watchful eye on his playmates and must have driven it home to Gobind that the real field of his future activities was the Punjab.

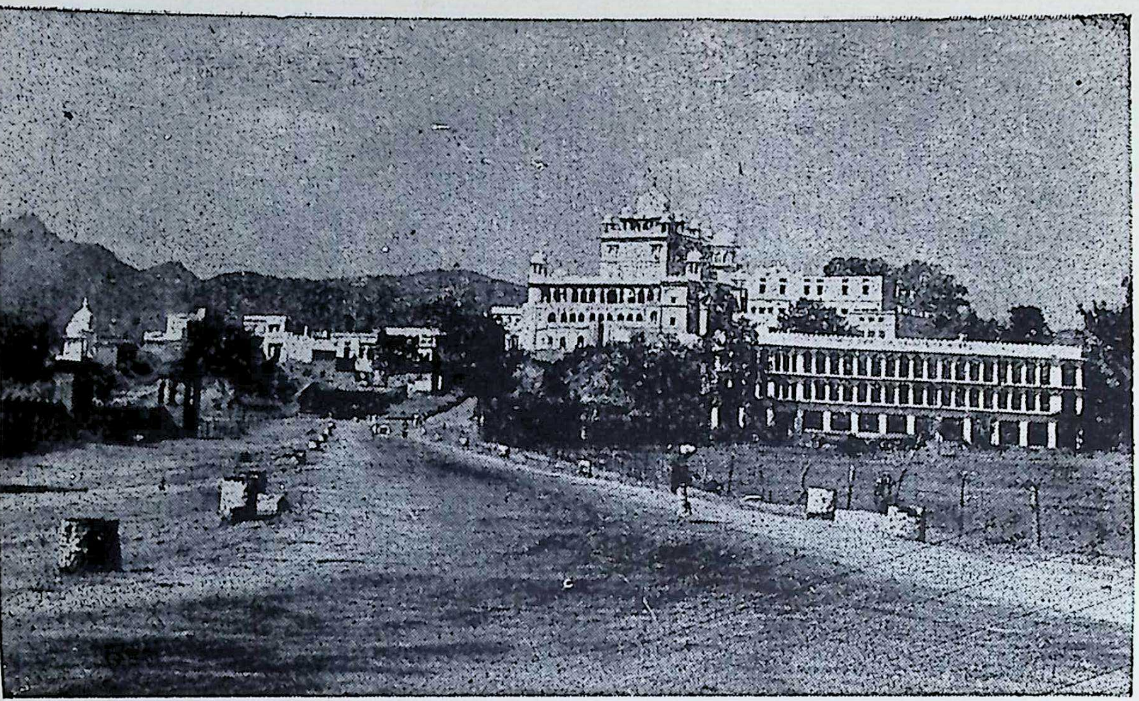
Gobind grew as a child far away from the intriguing atmosphere that prevailed in the Sikh *Panth* in the Punjab at that time and that helped Gobind grow up a fearless and upright child. Many anecdotes told of Gobind's early childhood reveal him developing the qualities that marked him out as a prince among men in later years. We are told he loved to play martial games, organising boat races, arranging mock fights and, as the leader, rewarding those who won in them.[26] The story of his behaviour, when once the chief officer of Patna passed by Gobind playing with his friends, reveals to us a boy who did not know what fear was. It is said when the attendant looking after Gobind called the boys to salute the officer 'the Child Guru told his comrades not to salaam but to make mouths at the officer'[27]. That, as a child, he broke pitchers of the ladies come to fetch water might be a zealous Sikh attempt to portray the Guru in the image of Krishna but that this attempt has been made is significant of some of the essential traits in Gobind's character.[28]

When as a child, Gobind went about playing with his Bihari friends, little did he know that this was to go a long way in making him unique even among the catholic Gurus. The streets of Patna were not merely to determine that he should have had as a child Bihari on his tongue but also that he should forge a poetry which for its martial cadence was to be unsurpassed in the history of Hindi language[29].

Guru Tegh Bahadur successfully consolidated his position at Makhowal within a year of his arrival in the Punjab and sent for his family from Patna. After having stayed in the capital of Bihar for more than half a decade, Nanaki, Gujari and Kripal accompanied by the few who had literally devoted their lives to the service of the Guru's household, made a move from Patna with the young Gobind.[30]

In February 1672 the devoted *sangat* of Patna, proud in having rendered service to the Guru and sad in the departure of his family, came upto Danapur to give Gobind an affectionate send off.[31] Under the experienced leadership of Kripal, the party passed through Paryag, Ayodhya, Lucknow, Hardwar, Mathura and Bindraban before reaching Lakhnaur in the summer of 1672.[32] At various places, sacred to Indian tradition and strong in Hindu orthodoxy, discussions must have taken place on matters ranging from deeply

Anandpur (Keshgarh)



courtesy : Gurtej Singh

philosophical and metaphysical to the forms and formalism then prevalent in the Hindu society. Gobind's contribution to these proceedings was childlike but indicated his being well soaked in Sikh attitudes. It is said that at Banaras he refused to accept the sacred thread when it was offered to him, as was customary with the *pandits* of that place.[33]

Gobind and the ladies had somewhat of a long stay at Lakhnaur, perhaps because of the rains which in the neighbourhood of that place begin in the month in which they had arrived there.[34] While Kripal moved ahead to make arrangements for the transport of the party to Makhowal, they were well looked after by Bhiken Shah whose estate at Khurram and Siana was only four miles from Lakhnaur.[35] A great admirer of Teg Bahadur, Bhiken Shah loved to see the five and a half years old son of the Sikh Guru play his games. We really wonder whether he could have seen any portents for the future in Gobind using his 'miniature arms . . . with skill quite unusual for the child of his age' or saw anything unusual in Gobind's 'love to form the boys of the town in opposing armies and engage them in sham fights and martial exercises'.[36]

Gobind was fortunate in having come to live with Tegh Bahadur at an age when his regular education could begin. We have Gobind's own testimony that Tegh Bahadur did not neglect his responsibility[37]. He appointed Pir Muhammad to teach Persian to the young Gobind.[38] Gurmukhi teaching, particularly necessary because Gobind had till then lived out of the Punjab, was entrusted to Sahib Chand.[39] For some inexplicable reason the Sikh tradition has failed to preserve for us the name of the teacher who taught Gobind his Sanskrit and that of the 'expert Rajput'[40] who initiated Gobind into horsemanship and the use of arms.

Gobind's tutors in various fields seem to have been very exacting. His later mastery of Braj *bhasha*[41] and Persian[42] is a proof of Gobind's early grounding} in these languages. The fact that before he was twenty he could compose *Chandi di Var*[43] and later dictate the whole of the *Adi Granth* at Damdama[44] at a time of great personal stress reveal how hard his Gurmukhi teacher had worked on Gobind. The efficiency of the Rajput tutor was reflected in Gobind's battles.

The influence of Tegh Bahadur's *darbar* on Gobind as a child can hardly be exaggerated.[45] His father sitting with his associates and friends must have fascinated Gobind soon after his arrival from Patna and he must have begun to visit it regularly quite early. Gobind's love for his own *darbar* in later years and his keenness to enrich it is a measure of his indebtedness to the many visits to his father's *darbar* as a child. Gobind must have been particularly struck by the several Braji poets who sat there.[46]

We can easily imagine Gobind then subjected to a discipline which later helped him to order his multiple activities remarkably well. He would be made to rise early in the morning to be ready for reciting the *Japji*. He would then have to move to his mother and grandmother, to pay them respects before going to the Gurdwara. He would not only have to attend the prayer meetings in their regularity but also occasionally to sing a hymn or two in praise of the Lord. When a little older, he was perhaps required sometimes to recite a hymn from the *Granth Sahib* and thereby to satisfy the craving of large congregations that daily came from far and near. He might soon have been associated also with the distribution of food to the visitors and the poor.

Gobind was lucky in his playmates at Makhowal. There was Maniya[47] with a contemplative bent of mind, later to be a lifelong companion of Gobind in literary pursuits. Suraj Mal's two grandsons, who had gone as the youngest members of the party to welcome the young Gobind when he was to first arrive at Makhowal[48], remained his favourites both in childhood and in later life. His five cousins, the sons of his father's sister[49], were as much his companions in martial games as they were to be fearless commanders in the battle of Bhangani. Nand Chand[50] was not very talented but in his devotion the young Gobind must have seen the strength that lay in equal companionship between the son of the Guru and the son of the disciple.

On the whole, it was a hard but blissful life that Gobind was leading at Makhowal when suddenly there came the first, if not the most, mortifying experience of his life : his father was arrested, taken to Delhi and brutally put to death.

Gobind was too young at the moment to do anything but shed helpless tears on the loss the Sikh *panth* and he had suffered; but in later years, he surely pondered over the meaning of what had happened in Delhi on the cold wintery night of 11th November 1675.[51] Some of the questions that must have agitated him then were : could it be that his father's opponents for the *gaddi* engineered it ? Did the *masands* have a hand in it ? Was it the weakness of the Sikh Church and the peaceable disposition of its members that encouraged it ? Or, was it much more complicated and represented the eternal conflict between the good and the evil, between *dharma* and *adharma* in which the *daintas* fight the *devtas* to have their temporary victories?

The deep impact of Tegh Bahadur's execution in determining the thoughts and actions of Gobind can hardly be exaggerated. That makes it necessary for us to have a critical look at the circumstances leading to the martyrdom of the ninth Guru.

Aurangzib had come to the throne in 1659[52] as the champion of Sunni orthodoxy in the Empire. He had earned the reputation of being a fit representative of that section even as a prince. In 1645 soon after his appointment to the Governorship of Gujrat he had not only converted the temple of Chintamani into a mosque but, as if that was not enough, 'had slaughtered a cow in the temple'[53]. He continued demolishing temples throughout his Governorships in the Deccan in the belief that he was fulfilling a divine duty enjoined on every true Muslim. He was pleased to reflect that 'the village of Satara near Aurangabad was my hunting ground' and 'on the top of a hill stood a temple with an image of Khande Rao. By God's grace I demolished it, and forbade the temple dancers (murtis) to ply their shameful trade'[54]. He remembered with regret in 1665 that since he had left the Deccan many temples which were 'earlier

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destroyed by my orders' were repaired and idol worship was resumed in them.[55]

Having come to the throne, Aurangzib hastened to convince the orthodox Muslims in the Empire of their having backed the right horse. In 1659, the year of his coronation,[56] he ordered, though with an element of understandable discretion: 'It has been decided according to our Canon Law that standing temples should not be demolished, but no new temples allowed to be built';[57] but he bacame more and more aggressive with the passage of years. The climax in the policy seems to have come in the early seventees. In April 1669, he had 'ordered the governors of all provinces to demolish the schools and temples of the infidels and strongly put down their teachings and religious practices'.[58] His order to Orissa in 1670 is indicative of the urgency of the work in his eyes: 'Every idol-house built during the last 10 or 12 years, whether with brick or clay, should be demolished without delay' and the Governor should not 'allow, the cursed Hindus and the despicable infidels to repair their old temples'[59].

The extent to which Aurangzib wanted to go can be judged from the administrative measures taken by him. He appointed officers in all the sub-divisions and the cities of the Empire to enforce the regulations of Islam with the destruction of Hindu places of worship as one of their chief duties. So great was the number of such officers that a Director-General had to be placed over them to guide their activity.[60] The *qazis* were actively associated with the new policy. The officers were told that reports of the destruction of temples would be looked upon as authentic only if they bore their seal and attestation.[61]

The attack on the temples began mounting up after 1672 when in every *pargana* officers went 'from the thanas with orders from the Presence for the destruction of the idols'.[62] Typical of what began happening under the impact of the new policy was an incident that occurred in Malwa. 'Wazir Khan ... sent Ganda Khan, a slave with 400 troops to destroy all temples around Ujjain' and at Soren 'one of his officers slew the priest, broke the image and defiled the sanctuary' of Sitaramji temple there.[63] Aurangzib's iconoclasm, at the height of its frenzied zeal in the seventees, would not distinguish between the Hindu temple and the Sikh Gurdwara.[64] In one of his orders, Aurangzib directed 'the temples of the Sikhs [to] be destroyed and Guru's agents for collecting tithes and presents of the faithful to be expelled from the cities.'[65]

When that was the general policy of Aurangzib, Tegh Bahadur's activities as the Sikh Guru ran into a dangerous clash with the powerful Empire. In 1673, he moved down from Makhowal and toured the Malwa region of the Punjab. Guru Hargobind and Har Rai had converted a large number of sturdy Jats in this area to Sikhism and they needed guidance on how to face Aurangzib's onslaught. The Guru received a hearty welcome. His following increased. With his reputation on the ascendant, the people of Malwa and the south eastern Punjab came in large numbers, paid him homage and made many offerings. In the course of his tour the Guru exhorted the people to give up all fear and to face tyranny with resolute calmness.[66]

As if to make the precept and the example go together, Tegh Bahadur seems to have shown the courage of conviction and invited even the Muslims to become Sikhs, if they felt like doing so. At Saifabad, he converted one Saif-ud-din to Sikhism and at Garhi near Samana won the devotion of another Muhammadan, a Pathan.[67]

The activities of Tegh Bahadur did not go unnoticed. Aurangzib, when informed of what Tegh Bahadur was doing, ordered his arrest, but, before that could be done, the Sikh Guru was back at Makhowal. Oblivious of Aurangzib's action against him, he soon after received a deputation of Kashmiri *pandits* at his headquarters.[68]

Aurangzib had appointed a new Governor in Kashmir in 1671 with the directions that he should demolish temples and convert people to Islam. The new Governor, as if to make up for the late start, went about the task with a ferocious thoroughness and massacred those who presevered in their adherence to the faith of their forefathers.[69]

Some of the Kashmiri *pandits* thought of doing something to resist the attempt at total conversion in Kashmir and, not very surprisingly, thought of approaching the grandson of Guru Arjan and the son of Hargobind for guidance. The former had died for his convictions seventy years earlier and the latter had unhesitatingly used arms against the Mughals in the neighbourhood of Lahore itself.[70] Tegh Bahadur's tour of 1673-74 in Malwa must have encouraged them to believe that a meeting with the then Sikh Guru would be fruitful.

The Kashmiri *pandits* met Tegh Bahadur at Makhowal in June 1675.[71] It is difficult to say what precisely transpired at the meeting.[72] Tegh Bahadur might have told them to stick to their faith with courage and thus inspire others to follow their example.

The Guru went on a second tour of the Malwa soon after the *pandits* met him and this time he proceeded as far as Agra. May be, he went there on the insistent invitation of the *sangat* which appears to be then functioning under the leadership of an influential and enthusiastic Sikh.[73] It was here that Aurangzib's orders were executed and Tegh Bahadur was arrested with five companions, Mati Dass, Gurditta and 'three others whose names are said to be Uda, Chima and Dayala'.[74] The Guru was treated as a dangerous and influential prisoner and brought to Delhi under a large escort.[75]

In the mistaken belief that the best way of unnerving the Guru to accept Islam, and thus to disown the whole meaning of his activities in the previous years, would be to show to Tegh Bahadur how horrible death could be, Mati Dass was tortured to death in a way that defies description. Bound between two pillars he was cut in two with a saw;[76] but the victim bore it with fortitude and earned for himself an honoured place in the daily *ardas* of the community[77].

The Guru's execution followed soon after but not before he had successfully conveyed to Anandpur his nomination of Gobind as his successor in the confident hope that 'when Guru Gobind is there, the Lord's name and His saints will flourish'.[78]

III

On the Way to Manhood

Gobind was nine years and three months old when in the Baisakhi congregation of 1676 at Makhowal, the Sikhs formally proclaimed him the Guru. There came to the gathering powerful *masands* besides the Sikhs, as much to see the new Guru anointed as to have a trial of strength. The devotees of the Guru had found in Kripal an able leader[2] to defeat the *masands*.

The Sikh tradition in its zeal to attribute all decisions to the Guru right from the day he came to the *gaddi* has blurred the real issue involved in this struggle. It would like us to believe that no sooner Gobind was anointed than the *masands* proposed that the headquarters be shifted from Makhowal but the Guru opposed it. Gobind had his way and the township established by his father continued to enjoy the privilege of the new Guru's presence within it precincts.[3] The tradition does not satisfactorily explain why the *masands* wanted the change just as it does not tell us why the Guru opposed it.[4] In all probability the debate was between 'uncle Kripal' and the powerful *masands* on issues which were much deeper. Even if the arguments were about the shifting of the headquarters, the stake was the guardianship of the Guru and consequently, the guidance of the Sikh *panth*. What made the 'headquarters' important was the certainty that for a long time to come Gobind would not be able to stand on his own.

Kripal and his supporters won and for the next nine years he guided the destinies of the Sikh *panth* with Gobind's mother and grandmother as his chief advisers.[5] It helped Gobind to tide over the initial shock of his father's cruel execution and grow to manhood a determined but not a bitter man.

Kripal's chief aim as the guardian of the young Guru was to see that Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom did not demoralise the Sikhs. If that happened, he rightly feared, the Sikh *panth* would disintegrate into many sects. A few *masands* might then gain but the Sikhs as a people would suffer.

The task of saving the *panth* from the fissiparous tendencies was not easy but Kripal went about his work methodically and tactfully. He prevailed upon the Sikhs and the Guru's household to take the martyrdom with a philosophic resignation and avoid giving any offence, for the time being at least, to the Hill Rajas or the Mughal administration. At the same time, he encouraged more and more Sikhs to come to Makhowal and transfer their undivided devotion to the young Guru.

Circumstances combined to help Kripal succeed admirably. Paradoxically, the factors that helped Kripal arose from the martyrdom of the ninth Guru. The sturdy people in the plains adjoining Kiratpur[6] had been made Sikhs by Hargobind and Har Rai, and Tegh Bahadur in his life time had worked hard to retain their loyalty. He had made strenuous tours in this region in 1673-75 and had made himself popular with them.[7] The real triumph of the Sikh faith over them came however when he had died as a martyr.

The manner of Tegh Bahadur's death, while it evoked admiration, won for the *gaddi* an absolute devotion of the Sikhs. Many a waverer who had earlier looked upon Ram Rai as the rightful successor of Har Rai and Har Krishan, had his doubts cleared and now recognized Gobind with a clear conscience. The change in Aurangzib's attitude to Ram Rai also quickened the shift of loyalties from him to Gobind. Having executed Tegh Bahadur, the Mughal Emperor no longer felt the necessity of patronising the one time serious claimant to 'Nanak's *gaddi*' and 'directed Ram Rai to retire to the wilderness of Doon and refrain from meddling in public affairs'.[8] The latter, having finally lost the hope of obtaining Guruship with the help of the Mughal Emperor contented himself with the foundation of a new centre of his own at Dehra Dun and ceased bothering about obtaining the pontificate at Makhowal. Kripal was quick to use these favourable factors and prevailed upon the Sikhs to come in large numbers, pay homage and make costly presents to the youthful occupant of the *gaddi* at Makhowal.

Perhaps realizing that Gobind had still to go a long way to hold his own against serious rivals and powerful *masands*, Kripal devoted special care to his education. It is difficult to say if he continued with the old teachers or appointed new ones but in all probability he left the earlier arrangement undisturbed. Gobind's old teachers had worked hard and knew Gobind well. They had the additional advantage of knowing Tegh Bahadur's ideas on how to train Gobind. We do not have to be adulatingly attached to Gobind in imagining that as a student he would be the pride of all the four who taught him. He succeeded as well with Firdausi[9] as with the *Puranas*.[10] He soon began to recite and expound the *Granth*. Under the guidance of the 'expert Rajput', who accompanied young Gobind in his 'hunting expeditions' in the forests around Makhowal, he became proficient in firing the musket[11] and shooting the arrow with both hands.[12]

As was to be expected from one who had been a faithful disciple of Tegh Bahadur during the whole of his pontificate, Kripal continued with the patronage of the literary *darbar* of the late Guru. In doing that he supplied Gobind with an influence that made for Gobind's rapid progress with his studies. It created the right climate for the literary pursuits of Gobind and brought him in association with 'some of the most prominent Braji poets of the age'.[13] Their activities and interests left a deep impress upon the mind of Gobind and moulded his whole personality.

A year and half after the execution of Tegh Bahadur, Kripal honoured an important commitment of his late master. He married Gobind to Jito.[14] That she was to be Gobind's spouse had been decided by Tegh Bahadur sometime in 1673.[15] Bhikia, a resident of Lahore, had come to Makhowal and successfully persuaded the then Guru to accept his daughter for Gobind.[16] Tegh Bahadur might have envisaged the marriage soon after the acceptance of the proposal, but he had gone on his fateful tours of Malwa which had ultimately led to his arrest at Agra. Kripal honoured Tegh Bahadur's commitment at the earliest, though that meant his breaking the time honoured custom of leading the bridegroom in a marriage procession to the house of his prospective father-in-law. Gobind and Jito became husband and wife at Makhowal itself.[17] It is difficult to determine whether this was because of the fear of the Mughals who governed from Lahore or of the *masands* who were powerful in the areas on the way to that city.

Kripal seems to have succeeded in consolidating his position as the key man in the *panth* soon after the marriage. He now gave up his earlier discretion and became bold. He made the young Guru assume the martial appearance of Hargobind who had 'a stable of seven hundred horses, three hundred mounted followers constantly in attendance upon him and a guard of sixty match-locks'.[18] At the same time, Kripal recruited for Guru Gobind an 'army' and made it publicly known that the Guru would now feel particularly pleased if the gifts were of use to the soldiers. He followed it up by selecting a place strategically better situated than Makhowal, and set up a small establishment there.[19]

This change was reflected, in all probability by design, in the appearance of the Guru's *darbar*. The young Guru would now meet his daily congregation in a costly tent with elephants and horses as a part of the establishment.[20] Gobind would wear an aigerette and sit on a raised platform. The Sikhs called him 'Sacha Padshah' and far off princes visited Anandpur—Makhowal.[21] The whole setting was that of a regal court.[22]

Kripal appears to have effected the change with ease for two reasons. The disruptionist *masands* had been completely isolated by now and Nanaki and Sundari supported him. Nanaki might well have seen in the change the fulfilment of her husband's dream.

Gobind still in his teens must have been thrilled by the change. The centre of everything around, he must have been inspired by the new horizons opening before him. We might attribute the prodigious development of Gobind, both in literary studies and martial traits, to this state of mind also.

It was inevitable that the change in the Guru's establishment should lead to a conflict with the Raja of Bilaspur. If it did not come for a long time that was because like Gobind, the Raja of the state was also a child but did not have an uncle as able as Kripal to guide him.

Situated between what were later distinguished as Kangra and Simla group of Hill States, Bilaspur was then one of the most powerful states between the Jumna and the Ravi. The sudden death of the able Raja Deep Chand, however, had not allowed it to play its due role in the politics of the Hill States for a long time.

Deep Chand had been invited by the Raja of Kangra in 1667 to be treacherously poisoned to death and that had begun a long crisis in the state. Bhim Chand, the new occupant of the *gaddi* was a minor and his mother, Jalal Devi and his uncle, Manak Chand, who was the *wazir* struggled for effective power in the state. The Rani was victorious and after some time succeeded not only in removing Manak Chand from the *wazarat* but also in expelling him from the state. That resolved the internal crisis, but began an external threat. Manak Chand, having unsuccessfully tried to interest the Kangra Raja, and through him the Mughal *faujdar* of Kangra to attack Bilaspur went to the *faujdar* of Sarhind.[23]

The new *wazir*, Parmanand, proved as able as he was loyal to the state. He beat back the attack from Sarhind and won popular acclaim for the young master. By the beginning of the eighties, he had trained Bhim Chand into a good warrior to play his role in the Hill States effectively.

It was at this stage, with his reputation quite high that Bhim Chand took note of the change in the ways of the Guruship at Makhowal. The Guru's headquarters lay on the borders of his state and were in the vicinity of Hindur and Mughal territory. It was only natural that he should have given the change at Makhowal a special attention.[24]

Bhim Chand now became very keen on asserting his authority on the establishment of the Guru and in the pride of his youth threw all caution to the winds and treated the young Gobind and the experienced Kripal in a very cavalier fashion. He insisted on the Guru recognizing his authority in a manner that was both shabby and insulting. He not only demanded tribute[25] as an overlord which none of the Sikh Gurus had paid till then but insisted on being presented with the things of his choice[26] which Kripal, as the guardian of the Guru, rightly refused to give. Considering the refusal as a challenge to his authority, he now attacked the Guru but was beaten back[27]. Both surprised and shocked he suddenly became conscious of his weakness in engaging the Guru's men in the strategically situated Anandpur-Makhowal and desisted from another attempt. Perhaps fearing that the states on his north and north eastern border might take advantage of his discomfiture he hurriedly packed up and went back.

The unexpected conflict perhaps because it was not followed by any understanding between the victorious and the defeated, began a period of extreme tension for Kripal. In this stage of suspended hostilities, constant clashes between the Guru's men and Bhim Chand's soldiers were inevitable. Each new clash must have appeared to Kripal as a prelude to a full fledged attack by the 'overlord' of Makhowal. Kripal, a far sighted individual, might have expected that state of affairs even when his Sikhs were celebrating their victory over Bhim Chand in 1682, and must have decided for change in the Guru's headquarters then. But there was no alternative as yet.

For three more years, from 1682 to 1685,[23] the Guru's headquarters continued to remain at Makhowal; and these years were probably the most important in Gobind's way to manhood. We find his genius asserting itself in more ways than one. He now shared the management of the Sikh *panth* with his uncle, composed couplets revealing his mastery over the medium, and began to synthesise the best in the Hindu philosophical thought as understood by him through his study of its rich mythological literature and the Sikh religious thought as handed down to him by his illustrious predecessors.

It must be said to the credit of Kripal that unlike some other 'guardians' known to history, he made Gobind's transition to manhood easy and smooth. He deliberately started keeping himself in the background in order to initiate Gobind into his responsibilities.

The Sikh tradition tells us many anecdotes of how Gobind participated in the affairs of the *panth* during this period. The image it invokes is that of a young Guru, high minded but playful, bubbling with wit and humour all the time. It depicts to us the Guru of sixteen and seventeen move out at night in the fashion of the benevolent kings of old to see if the *langars* functioned properly for the love of laughing at the defaulters in the *darbar* in the morning.[29] We are told of how he exposed the hypocritical *sanyasis* not by losing his temper but by 'pouring charcoal on the lids of the coconut bowls' to make the concealed 'gold mohars' drop out.[30] He would not tell the assembled Sikhs to discard caste but invite the downcaste *kalal* to his side with the meaningful epigram, *kalal Guru ke lal.*[31] He would not give a long discourse on the virtues of manual work but refuse to accept a glass of water from hands too 'scrupulously clean' to be 'pure'.[32]

The buoyancy of the youthful Guru, the Sikh traditional stories suggest, affected the followers too.

As if to pay the Guru in his own coin, they would not come to him to tell in a plain language how scandalous then the institution of the *masands* was. Instead, they would bring along 'itinerant dramatist's to stage a play for the Guru. Only when the story would unfold itself in all its horror that the Guru would see the point to be pained deeply.[33]

If the enthusiastic way in which Gobind shared the management of the Sikh *panth* with Kripal was indicative of the speed with which he was growing up after 1682, his literary compositions revealed the maturity of mind he had acquired in this period. The choice of his subjects show how confidently he felt he had already discovered himself.

As the head of a religious fraternity, it was right that his first composition should have been a devotional song, the *Jap*[34]. In this composition Gobind revealed his mastery over the Sikh philosophical thought as also his keenness not to break its continuity. The first eleven verses which set the theme would make that clear. They look upon God as follows :

> Contour and countenance, caste, class or lineage,
> He has none
>
> None can describe His form, figure, shape and
> semblance whatever

Immovable and self poised in His being without
fear, a luminous light supreme
He is the sovereign of the three worlds

The demons, the mortals and the angelic beings

Nay, even the grass blades in the forest

Proclaim Him to be boundless, endless and
infinite

O, who can count all thy names that are Thy
Glory

Through Thy enlightenment I will recount

All Thy attributive names.[35]

Gobind then passed on to give the names 'personal and impersonal, transcendental and immanent and metaphysical and mysterious'.[36]

It is suggested that Gobind wrote the *Jap* on the model of *Vishnu Sahsaram Nam.*[37] That might well be true but it should be remembered that Gobind's *Jap* was in complete consonance with Nanak's *Japji* and very appropriately both now constitute the morning prayer of the Sikhs.[38]

From the *Jap* to his next composition, the *Akal Ustat*, was only a step.[39] He realized, however, the difficulty of effectively singing the praises of the Immortal Being when he was hardly seventeen. He gave it up for later times but not before he had given an inkling of what he believed were some of His fundamental traits. He was Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Supreme. He was Timeless and All-Steel.[40] That God appeared All-Steel to Gobind at this stage is significant. It is the clue to his next composition.

The Chandi Charittar Ukat Bilas was a translation but with an originality that was a measure of his difference from the Durga worshippers of his times.[41] The new composition was a free version in Brajbhasha of *Durga Sapt Shati*[42] in the *Markandya Puran*.[43] Gobind described in stirring couplets the battles of Chandi, a mythological figure, against the demons.[44] The Goddess Durga was a common figure, in fact the most popular one, of worship on the hills but Gobind looked upon her as an incarnation of Bhagauti (Sword).[45] Its spirit which protected the weak, awakened the suppressed and inspired them to action against tyranny and injustice, was truly an instrument for fulfilling a divine purpose. Bhagauti was for Gobind truly the symbol of divine power itself. Had he not already described Him as All-Steel?

To Kripal, *the Chandi Charittar Ukat Bilas* must have appeared as a complete approval of the twist which he, as Gobind's guardian, had given to the policy of the Sikh *panth*. He might well have seen in it a grateful nephew finding a philosophical justification for the Sikhs to go about armed and for the Guru's court to have a martial appearance.

No sooner had Gobind finished the *Chandi Charittar* than he started writing the *Krishan Avtar*. His aim was to depict the battles of Krishna in all their vividness. He chose to do that by giving the story of Krishna from birth to death but that was because it gave the proper setting to Krishna's battles for *dharma*. He based himself on *Bhagvati Puran Dasam Granth*.[46].

Gobind could write only 1106 verses of the *Krishan Avtar* at Makhowal before the Guru's headquarters were shifted from the place.[47] In the first 440 verses Gobind wrote about Krishna's parents and his childhood. The 316 verses that followed dealt with Krishna's stay in Kunj Gali and related his famous sports with the cow-maids and equally famous *maan-leel*a with Radha. Then in 272 verses Gobind gave an account of Krishna's departure for Mathura and Radha, and also of her maids suffering on that account. The Guru had reached the climax of Krishna's career and had started narrating his duels and battles with Kans, Jarasandh and their followers when the move for the new headquarters postponed its completion.[48]

While writing the *Krishan-Avtar*, Gobind seems to have been completely carried away by Krishna, easily the most fascinating character in Hindu mythology. He was gripped with the idea of a saviour appearing to wage the war of righteousness and *dharma* and planned a thorough search in the whole range of Hindu mythology. To make the search as thorough as possible, he prevailed upon his uncle to send five learned Sikhs to Banaras to collect for him the material from the repository of ancient thought and culture.[49]

In his youthful optimism, born as much from the study of Krishna's career as Kripal's policy of transforming the Sikh into a soldier, he did not at this stage ask himself the question which troubled him later: why things go wrong with the mission of *avatars*, necessitating incarnation again and again. He also did not then enquire into the competence of all the *avatars* given in the *Puranas* to be described that way.

Gobind's optimism was not shared by the elderly Gujari and the old Nanaki. As they heard of repeated clash between the Guru's Sikhs, now visiting Makhowal in increasingly greater numbers every year, and Bhim Chand's contingents on the border, they felt worried. Their worry was all the greater because if anything happened to Gobind there was no one to succeed to the *gaddi* which, they were experienced enough to realize, had practically become hereditary. Under the circumstances their insistence on Gobind going in for another marriage is understandable. It is highly probable that Kripal joined the two ladies and Gobind, after a half-hearted resistance, yielded and married.

The lucky girl was Sundari, the daughter of a Soni Khatri of Bajwara. This marriage, like the first, took place at Makhowal. If in 1676 it was dangerous to go to Lahore, now in 1685[50] it was difficult to move out even to the comparatively nearer Bajwara.

The marriage was soon followed by what must have looked like a good piece of luck to Nanaki and Gujari, as much as to Kripal and many Sikhs. Medni Parkash who had come to the *gaddi* of Sirmur a year earlier,[51] sent an invitation to the Guru to come and settle in his state. It afforded a welcome escape from the uncomfortable and precarious stay at Makhowal and so in the summer of 1685 Gobind and Kripal and with them the Guru's headquarters moved out of the familiar surroundings at Makhowal.[52]

Gobind was eighteen and a half as he and his caravan wended the way to Sirmur. We wonder if he then really noticed the contrast between his shift to Paonta and Krishna's march to Mathura to fight the demons and fight for *dharma*. But, if he really did, he was not the one to be disheartened. There was still a long life before him and his Sikhs had shown not only enough vitality in keeping their *panth* intact but also enough strength to withstand the powerful Bhim Chand.

Gobind's entry into Sirmur also marked his entry into manhood. On the 6th of August, 1685, (22 Savan 1742) when he laid the foundation of Paonta[53] on the borders of Sirmur and Garhwal, he was shouldering his responsibilities with confidence.

IV

Initiation into Wars

The invitation of Medni Parkash to Gobind to settle down into Sirmur, was not a disinterested act born out of adoration of the Guru's mission or admiration for his personality. He did so because he appeared to have calculated that the presence of the Guru and his armed followers would be useful to his state.

Sirmur (later known as Nahan) was a mountainous tract with a steep rise from the south west to the north east, with an elevation of more than 11,000 feet at its highest level. It was cut into two by the Giri, a tributary of the Jumna.[1] The main river itself passed through the eastern parts and separated it from the Duns now famous for the sites of Mussoorie and Dehra Dun. The trans-Jumna area belonged to the Raja of Garhwal.

These two neighbouring states had an enmity running back through four generations, if not more. The Garhwal Rajas had enough reason to hate the Sirmur house for its being an instrument in the hands of the Mughals who had been keen on depriving the rulers of Garhwal of their independent status. Moreover, the Sirmur Rajas who were then basking in the sunshine of Mughal favour, had seldom missed the opportunity of territorial gain at the expense of Garhwal.

The Kangra and Simla Hill States had been brought under the sovereignty of the Mughals by the time of Jahangir[2] and Shah Jahan had decided to bring Garhwal under his influence. Possibly because it was inaccessible from the south, the Mughals required the help of the Sirmur Rajas in their attempts to subjugate Garhwal.

In 1635, Najabat Khan, the *faujdar* of the country at the foot of the Kangra Hills was entrusted with the task of bringing Garhwal under Mughal supremacy.[3] He marched into Garhwal with Mandhata[4], the great grandfather of Medni Parkash. The campaign was a success in its initial stages but Najabat Khan became too ambitious and went far into the Garhwal territory. He was cut off from his supplies and suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of the Garhwalis. He had actually to purchase the safety of his men on the condition that each of his soldiers should throw down his arms and get his nose cut.[5] Najabat's failure cost him his Faujdari and Jagir[6]. The Sirmur Raja, however, gained from the abortive Mughal venture for he was allowed to retain the territory conquered in the initial stages of the compaign.[7]

In 1654 Shah Jahan sent another expedition against the inaccessible Garhwal and took a keen personal interest in the matters of preparations and appointed a special commander with a formidable force of 10,000 under him.[8] To win the whole-hearted cooperation of Mandhata, Shah Jahan promised to the Sirmur Raja to hand over to him all those territories of Garhwal 'that were adjacent to his own dominions'. The Mughals were to keep only the Dun to themselves.[9]

Mandhata died just before the campaign[10], but his son and successor distinguished himself in this compaign. He not only got the territories promised by Shah Jahan but also received from the Emperor 'the title of Subhaq (Subhak) Parkash'[11] by which he is known to posterity. An Imperial *farman* of 1655 granted to him the ilaqa of Kotaha and on its strength he expelled the zamindar of that place and annexed that territory to the state of Sirmur[12].

When Aurangzib became the Emperor, Raja Subhak Parkash rendered important services to him. He intercepted the correspondence between Dara Shukoh and his son Sulaiman Shukoh.[13] Dara was then in the Punjab making desperate efforts to gain the Mughal throne, and Sulaiman at the moment was a guest of Prithvi Shah, the Garhwal ruler.[14]

With the double purpose of persuading Prithvi Shah to hand over Sulaiman and to accept Mughal sovereignty[15], Aurangzib planned a large expedition against Garhwal and entrusted it to Ra'ad Khan. Perhaps believing that a Rajput as an associate would be very useful in a predominantly Hindu area, he also sent Rup Singh, an uncle of Raja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur, with the Mughal commander. But the active co-operation of the Nahan ruler was even more important than the presence of a Rajput general with the Mughal army. No wonder that Aurangzib flattered the Nahan ruler with the title of *Qudwat-ul-Ismal*, thereby indicating that he ranked him equal, if not higher than Rup Singh who was given the title of *Zabdat-ul-Ismal*.[16]

We do not know much about this campaign but we do know about an important gain to the Nahan ruler. Subhak Parkash got the 'ilaqa of Khalakhan' identified in the *Sirmur State Gazetteer* with the 'modern ilaqa of Kalagadh which lies near Dehra Dun' and which was held by the Chiefs of Nahan during the period of British supremacy.[17]

Subhak Parkash died in 1664 and Budh Parkash succeeded to the *gaddi* of Nahan. In his reign, the favours which this state had so often received from the Mughal suzerains and at the expense of Garhwal were not forthcoming. This was because Medni Shah (different from Medni Parkash of Nahan), the heir apparent to the Garhwal *gaddi* had handed over Sulaiman Shah to Aurangzib in December 1660;[18] and soon after when he became the Raja, he had recognized the Mughal Emperor as his suzerain. In appreciation of this submission, Aurangzib had handed back the Dun to the new Garhwal ruler.[19]

With Nahan possessing Kalagarh, and Garhwal owning the Dun, the boundaries of the two rival states got mixed up in a dangerous way which Aurangzib used to his own advantage. He succeeded in retaining the allegiance of the two states by showing favours to Nahan and Garhwal by turns. This was the state of affairs in 1675 when, after executing Tegh Bahadur, Aurangzib had asked the Garhwal Raja to give quarter to and to keep watch on Ram Rai in the Dun area. During his long reign, there was no change in this situation.[20]

It was an explosive arrangement and could lead to a conflict between Nahan and Garhwal any time; but as long as the strong hand of Aurangzib was there at Delhi, the rulers of the two states had to avoid it. Even after Aurangzib had moved to Rajputana and thence to the Deccan after 1681, nothing happened on the Nahan-Garhwal frontier because of the cautiousness of the then Nahan ruler, Budh Parkash. In the earlier years of Aurangzib's reign, he had carried on a 'curiously interesting correpondence' with Jahan Ara,[21] the favourite daughter of Shah Jahan, and he feared that Aurangzib's government might utilize his conflict with Garhwal to weaken him and pass on the frontier territories to the rival at Srinagar. Fortunately for him the then ruler at Garhwal, Medni Shah, known for his discretion, did not precipitate the matters.

In 1684 both Budh Parkash and Medni Shah died[22] to be succeeded by Medni Parkash in Sirmur and Fateh Shah in Garhwal. Both the new chiefs were ambitious men of ability and for that very reason they were afraid of each other. While watching each other's moves on the frontier, they had to be on guard against surprise attacks.

Medni Parkash invited Gobind in the middle of 1685. He also decided that the headquarters of the Guru should be at Paonta,[23] a place guarding the only convenient route from one state to the other.[24] Medni Parkash wished to use Gobind and his men as Sirmur's guardsmen on the frontier.

It is difficult to say whether or not Kripal and Gobind before they left Makhowal really knew that their headquarters would be at Paonta. It is equally difficult to determine their reaction to the suggestion of the young ruler of Nahan to that effect. What is certain, however, is that the Guru was allowed to build a fort there.[25] May be, that was the minimum that Kripal and Gobind demanded before shifting to the place which the Sirmur Raja had chosen for them to settle down.

Guru Gobind was destined to stay at Paonta for three years[26] but the first few months of his stay there were critical. His description that 'there in the forest of this place I killed a lot of tigers, bears and antelopes',[27] which suggests a carefree life, does not correctly portray the real state of affairs during these months. He was then a worried man and his chief anxiety arose from the fact that his headquarters were sand-witched between two hostile states.

Gobind's position was precarious but he met the situation with coolness and foresight. His immediate tasks were to improve relations between two rival Hill States and, at the same time, to increase his own military strength. He succeeded in both. His success in improving the relations between Nahan and Garhwal, in particular, must have looked then a miracle.

The Guru's approach to the task of bringing the two hostile Hill Rajas closer had been subtle. He began by getting friendly with Fateh Shah but without exciting suspicions of Medni Parkash. That in doing that the Guru should have successfully exploited even the rival Ram Rai shows how intelligently he made his moves even at this young age.

It may be recalled that Ram Rai had been sent to the remoteness of Garhwal in 1675 by Aurangzib to be watched but also to be treated with consideration. Medni Shah, the then ruler of Garhwal, allowed him to establish a centre at Khairabad, which later developed into Dehra Dun. We have also noticed already that having lost the active support of Aurangzib, he had ceased aspiring for the Guruship at Makhowal. At Dehra Dun, his chief props were the *masands*. But they were extremely overbearing towards him. What prevented them from becoming completely mutinuous was Ram Rai's influence with the Raja and the heir apparent to the *gaddi* of Garhwal.[28]

Gobind, now only thirty miles from Dehra Dun,[29] soon gauged Ram Rai's weakness and used the psychological moment to heal up old wounds. Ram Rai, on his part, once assured that Gobind would not rebuff him, hastened to patch up old differences with Gobind[30] by recognizing him the rightful Guru.

Gobind made use of this conciliation to get in touch with Fateh Shah and soon won the esteem and regard of the young Garhwal ruler. He utilized this to bring a conciliation between Fateh Shah and Medni Parkash and thus made his position at Paonta secure, at least for some time to come.[31]

It appears that Gobind had already convinced Medni Parkash that his moves were in the interests of the Nahan state. In his Rajput pride the young Nahan ruler would not take the initiative in giving up an old feud with Garhwal but may well have watched the moves of Gobind with approval and felt happy when the Guru succeeded.

This diplomatic success in the beginning of 1686 did not make the far-sighted Guru complacent. He well understood that old enemities die hard and he could not altogether rule out the possibility of the recrudescence of the old troubles. He, therefore, continued increasing the strength of his 'army' and in doing that even took risks that he would have ordinarily avoided. He went ahead with the construction of the fort and encouraged armed *manants* to stay with him, though he might have all along been doubtful of their loyalty. On the suggestion of Budhu Shah,[32] he recruited even the disbanded Pathans from the Mughal contingents, led by adventurers like Hayat Khan, Najabat Khan and Bhikhan Khan.

The Guru's main reliance however, continued to be on the hard core of men who had come with him from Makhowal, all of whom seem to have been subjected to strict military exercises ever since the head-quarters had shifted to Paonta. The crisis of Bhangani was to prove the wisdom of the Guru in having trained them so thoroughly as from among them emerged leaders of ability, courage and initiative. The most talented of these were Guru's five cousins, the sons of Bibi Bhani, and his play-mates of early childhood.

By the middle of 1686, Gobind seems to have felt strong and hopeful of a long and peaceful stay at Makhowal. He felt he could now give ample scope to his literary creativity. In the *Krishan Avatar*, he had already reached the most fascinating and warlike part of Krishna's career; but he first took up the composition of the *Sashtar Nam Mala*[33] which could enable him better to depict Krishna's warlike exploits in the cause, of course, of *dharma*, *The Sashtar Nam Mala* appears to be a mere catalogue of weapons,[34] an exercise in the 'conventional literary style of the times having for its model the emblematical verses of the great masters.'[35] But a more careful examination of this composition reveals that it was much more than a mere exercise in a literary style. It is true that one of the remarkable things about the composition was that it gave all possible names of the arms,[36] but it should not be forgotton that the weapons had been personified and, for Gobind, they were 'the medium of the worship of God'[37] The weapons had been used by gods and demons alike but it was their use by the former that was significant for Gobind because they had used them to fight in defence of righteousness and *dharma*. The *chaupais* and *dohas* of adoration, which Gobind composed while writing this composition, were all reserved for the weapons only when they were used by the righteous.

Almost at the same time, Gobind wrote *Var Sri Bhagavti Ji Ki*, popularly known now as *Chandi di Var*[38]. In this 'first Var of its Kind, complete and exhaustive and in blank verse, used for the first time in Punjabi literature'[39], he succeeded in putting lot of heroic sentiment. Though the source of the composition, as in *Chandi Charitar I*, was here also the tenth *Sakanda* of the Markandya, he related in this composition only the battles of Chandi.[40] Of the fifty-five stanzas in the *Var*, forty-nine described the battle scenes, 'the first five and twenty-first being purely narrative and informatory, helping to elucidate the situation'.[41] Chandi's battles were, in the eyes of Gobind, fought on the side of the righteous.

In November 1688 when Gobind was in the midst of the *Shastar Nam Mala Puran* and *Chandi di Var*, his second wife, Sundari gave birth to a son.[42] The Guru chose to give his first born, later to be the hero of his battles of Anandpur and Chamkaur, the name of Ajit. Perhaps he imagined the child grow up to handle the *shastras* and fight the battles of *dharma* and, like Chandi and Krishna, always win them.

With the *Nam Mala* and the *Var* completed by the mid 1687, Gobind took up his unfinished composition, *Krishan Avatar*. He picked up the old threads in July 1687[43] and having added 1508 verses in a year, completed the *Krishan Avatar* in July 1688.[44] Both because of the theme and the effect of his two earlier compositions the part of *Krishan Avatar* written during this period was 'exclusively devoted to heroic poetry' with a 'good deal of war poetry sprinkled here and there'.[45] It was natural that in this part of the *Krishan Avatar* the author should use *vir rus* and not the other two which he had used in the earlier portions, namely the *vatsakaya* and *Shrinagar* rasas[46]

The most significant portion of the composition, however, was the last verse in which the Guru explicitly stated that he had written the *Krishan Avatar* to wage a holy war :

> The tenth story of the Bhagvat is rendered into the (popolar) bhaka with no other purpose than that of war for the sake of righteousness.[47]

Gobind wanted to give his all to the holy wars. We find him saying in the *Krishan Avatar* itself that he was not interested in riches which could come to him from all parts of the country at his bidding but wished to die the death of a martyr.[48]

Hardly a month had passed before Gobind was standing on a mound six miles from Paonta directing a battle. He was later to give a very graphic description of the battle in his *Bachittar Natak*, 'a wonderous tale' of the Guru's own life. The animated description, as also the prominent place given to the battle in the *Natak*, would suggest that in 1697 when he wrote his autobiography, he did regard it as a part of the *dharam yudh* for which he was sent by God. Most probably this was his feeling even when he stood on the top of an elevation and saw Kripal hitting Hayat's head[49], watched Nand Chand piercing Najabat,[50] witnessed Sangho trampling the fierce Pathans[51] and saw his own arrows striking Hari Chand.[52]

The battle of Bhangani had resulted from Fateh Shah's decision to break his agreement with Nahan and bring all the disputed territory between the two states under him by force. But Gobind was the architect of his agreement with Medni Shah's state and was so close to the border and so strategically placed that Fateh Shah felt it necessary at the outset to break the Guru's headquarters at Paonta. He seems to have consulted some of the hill chiefs and successfully prevailed upon them to send their contigents before crossing the Jumna to attack the Guru.[53]

Fateh Shah had chosen to march on Paonta at a moment when the Guru's position had gone particularly weak. The armed *mahants* with the exception of their leader Kripal, had left him.[54] The Pathans, who were familiar with the Guru's resources, had actually changed sides to join Fateh Shah.[55]

In the beginning of August, when Fateh Shah and his 'army' traversed the mountainous tracts of the Dun to cross the Jumna to attack Paonta, it is very likely that he expected only a nominal resistance. He was yet to learn, after a bitter and costly experience, how well Gobind, his commanders and even the rank and file of his followers at Paonta had trained themselves.

Gobind chose to check Fateh Shah on the banks of the Giri at Bhangani, six miles to the north east of Paonta.[56]. Having correctly anticipated the route that the Garhwal troops would follow, he informed Budhu Shah at Sadhaura and Medni Parkash at Nahan and marched with his men to Bhangani and occupied a hillock to check Fateh Shah's march on Paonta. In acting with foresight and choosing his own ground for the clash, Gobind had won half the battle before it actually began[67].

From the Guru's account in the *Bachittar Natak*, it is difficult to comprehend clearly the way in which the two armies had deployed themselves to fight this battle. The overall impression that we get, however, is that the armies on both sides were divided into units with separate leaders making their moves on the directions of Fateh Shah and Gobind, the supreme commanders of their respective sides.

In the engagements at Bhangani — many were fought before the battle ended—units moved, singly or in groups as directed, engaged each other in the fight till the leader died or the force felt itself exhausted. Then the combanants would run to the supreme commanders who would send fresh men under new leaders.

In this type of fighting, the Guru having come earlier and established himself on an elavation got an immense advantage and made the best use of it. The bulk of his reserve, with the hillock in between, was hidden from the view of the rival commander, and he could plan the manouvers of his troops without letting the opponents know anything about his intentions. The Guru himself standing on an elevated ground could clearly see the whole of the force on the other side and could direct his men with an advantage denied to Fateh Shah. Consequently the initiative throughout the battle lay with Gobind and Fateh Shah's invading army was virtually on the defensive in all the engagements which followed the first rush of the Guru's men upon their opponents.

Gobind combined presence of mind with boldness and took a calculated risk at the very outset of the battle. He ordered the major part of the force with him to concentrate its attack on the Pathans who had been prominantly placed in the front by Fateh Shah. The units comanded by Gobind's four cousins, the two Kripals and Daya Ram, Sahib Chand and Dewan Chand, dashed to the field on horse or foot; some with the bow and the arrow, the others with the sword and the club. Of the unit Commanders, only Sangho Shah remained behind, probably in readiness to reinforce the attack when necessary.[58]

The Guru's bold move was richly rewarded when Mahant Kripal hit Hayat Khan on the head and killed the deserter. This was quickly followed by Sahib Chand's entering the fray to kill the 'bloody

Khan from Khorasan' and creating a havoc in the enemy's ranks'.[59] The Pathans lost nerve and the bulk of Fateh Shah's men were thrown into utter confusion and the Guru's men returned triumphant in order to regroup themselves for the next move. Most probably at this stage Budhu Shah's men and his two sons also arrived to share in the jubilations in Gobind's camp and to add to the small reserve that Gobind possessed.

Fateh Shah's side was humbled but not beaten. Believing, perhaps, that the first move of the Guru had succeeded because of the inefficiency of the Pathans, the hill troops of Gopal and Hari Chand now took the lead. Gobind sent Jit Mal and he, or one of his men, succeeded in hitting Hari Chand unconscious. In the confusion that followed, Kesri Shah Jaswalia and Modhur Shah Dhadwalia, two of the prominent Chiefs on Fateh Shah's side escaped being killed only because the Guru's men desisted from hitting the fleeing enemy.[60]

At this stage, however, Hari Chand regained conciousness and hurriedly rallied the hill troops and the Pathans to encourage Fateh Shah in the hope that he might yet win the battle. Hari Chand was easily the ablest and the boldest commander on Fateh Shah's side[61] and that necessitated the Guru's offensive to be headed by Sangho Shah. Shah

Sangram, as the Guru called him later, fought hard and led his men well and killed Najabat Khan and many of his men, but he himself fell fighting.[62]

Stung by the death of Sangho Shah,[63] the Guru himself moved forward, forgetting for the moment that his own life was precious. He hit 'Bhikhan Shah on the face'[64] and fought a long duel of bows and arrows with Hari Chand.[65] He escaped narrowly on more than one occasion,[66] but ultimately took aim and killed Hari Chand.[67] Fateh Shah and his men now fled the field. Gobind had a complete victory.

The Guru had every reason to be happy with the result of the battle but was sorely disappointed in the attitude of the Nahan Raja. He had not only remained aloof from the battle,[68] which was as much his own as it was Gobind's, but also avoided seeing the Guru after the battle.[69] May be Medni Parkash now felt that a little generosity on his part to Fateh Shah, at the time of latter's discomfiture, would enable him to enter into a more lasting agreement with his neighbour. At any rate he did not want to give the impression that the Guru had fought Fateh Shah on his suggestion.

Under the circumstances, Gobind wisely discouraged the wild schemes of his excited men to cross the Jumna and march into Garhwal territory.[70]

On the contrary, he took his victorious army to Sadhaura[71] and then to Laharpur[72]. From there, he ordered his men to go to Makhowal; but himself proceeded to Toka[73] and, leaving Nahan entered the Ramgarh state and stayed at Tabra for more than a week.[74] He then went to Raipur,[75] and in all probability, through the mediacy of the Rani of that place, entered into a definite agreement[76] with Bhim Chand. Gobind was now free to join his army which was already in Makhowal.

V

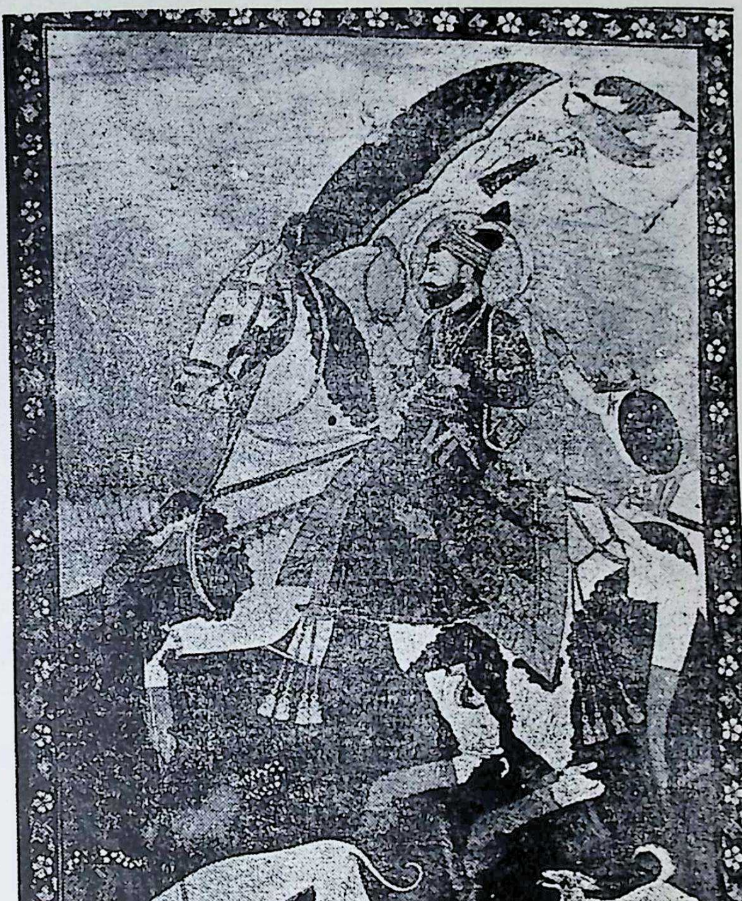
Discovering Himself

Guru Gobind was back at Anandpur–Makhowal late in 1688 in the confident hope that he would never leave it again. His optimism was based as much on Bhim Chand's agreement with him as on the new role that Bhim Chand seems to have chosen to play in the years to come.

During Gobind's absence from Anandpur–Makhowal, Bhim Chand's position in the hill politics had changed a great deal. Known chiefly as the head of an important state till 1685, he was now acknowledged as a great military commander. This was because in 1686, he had won a great victory over the combined forces of Bashahr, Mandi and Kothai.[1] The Rajas of these states had attacked Kulu and Bidhi Singh, the Raja of Kulu, had sought Bhim Chand's help. Perhaps because the Kulu Raja was his maternal uncle, Bhim Chand had fought with enthusiasm to win a great victory. He had then pursued the three Rajas as far as Nirmand to 'capture many forts' and expel the invaders.[2] Consequently in the combination that the Hill Rajas started

Equestrian Portrait of Guru Gobind Singh

(nimbate, Kangra style, early 19th century)



Courtesy : Dr. M. S. Randhawa

forming soon after to thwart Mughal overlordship, Bhim Chand of Kahlur was acknowledged its leader.

Among the Hill Rajas, the tradition of rebelling against the Mughals was an old one. The first wide spread rebellion had taken place in the reign of Akbar.[3] The Rajas of Nurpur—Basu, Suraj Mal and Jagat Singh — had revolted in the time of Jahangir.[4] Chander Bhan and Hari Chand of Kangra had resisted the Mughals in the later years of Jahangir and early in the reign of Shah Jahan. Perhaps believing that a concerted effort would be better rewarded, the Hill Rajas had formed a combination in the reign of Aurangzib in 1675 and even beaten the then Mughal Governor when he made an 'incursion in the hills'[5]. The Emperor's sudden return from the north west had however discouraged the combination so much that it soon after disintegrated. With Aurangzib away from the north for nearly a decade, the Rajas had felt encouraged and, once more, formed a combination at the time of Gobind's return to Makhowal.[6]

To the powerful and enthusiastic combination which included the states from all the three groups– Simla, Kangra and Jammu, the mutual quarrels looked small and insignificant. Bhim Chand, under the circumstances, was all cordiality to the Guru after he had returned to his old headquarters. Bhim

Chand in his role as the champion of independence saw in the victor of Bhangani a good ally.

Guru Gobind used the changed circumstances and the amicability of Bhim Chand to build up his headquarters with a remarkable boldness.[7] He weeded out those who had not been faithful to him in the battle of Bhangani[8] and renewed his contacts with the adoring disciples in the Malwa and the Doaba. He reorganised his *darbar* and rapidly increased the strength of the 'army'. He built a chain of forts around Anandpur[9] and garrisoned them with men trained to fire not only the musket but also the mounted gun. He could do all this with the tacit approval, if not the enthusiastic support, of Bhim Chand.

Two years after Guru Gobind came back to Anandpur, the combination of the Rajas all over the hills stopped paying the annual tribute. The *faujdars* of Kangra and Jammu, who used to collect tribute, naturally sought help from the Mughal Governor at Lahore. A strong contingent under Mian Khan, with Alif Khan as his deputy, was sent against the Hill Chiefs.[10] The object of this expedition was to crush resistance simultaneously in the Jammu and Kangra regions. Mian Khan himself went to Jammu, and sent Alif Khan to Kangra.[11]

Alif Khan took a clever step when instead of taking his troops to Kangra he moved to Nadaun,[12] twenty miles to the south east of Kangra.[13] Naduan seems to have been a *naib-faujdari*, with a small contingent to look after the south eastern part of the Kangra state. Alif Khan's aim was to make Nadaun his base and to make a quick end of the challenge of the hill Rajas by attaking Bhim Chand, the leader. He hurriedly raised a wooden fortress on an elevated ground at Nadaun[14] and asked the *faujdar* at Kangra to prevail upon the hill Rajas who had not joined the 'rebels' to come with their contingents to Nadaun. Kripal of Kangra and Dyal of Bijarwal soon joined Alif Khan. He was perhaps about to move to Bilaspur when Bhim Chand forestalled him.

Alif Khan had not calculated well the speed with which Bhim Chand, with the strength derived from the combination, could act against him. It was quite easy for the Bilaspur Raja to call the enthusiastic Raj Singh (Gopal of the *Bachittar Natak*)[15] and Ram Singh of Jaswan[16] to join him, for their states were quite close to Nadaun. The Rajas of distant states could not come themselves but it must have heartened Bhim Chand to receive troops from Prithvi Chand Dhadwal[17] and Sukhdev, a *gazi* from Jasrot.[18] Bhim Chand had especially invited Guru Gobind[19] who, believing perhaps that it was a *dharm-*

yudh, came in person at the head of a strong contingent, armed with bows and arrows and with a few muskets.

Though Bhim Chand had, thus, mustered a strong force to attack Alif Khan, his task was by no means easy. The opponents were entrenched in a fortress which, though not strong and only of wood[20], gave the advantage to its occupants of a cover denied to Bhim Chand. Alif Khan being on an elevation was another handicap in Bhim's way to victory. But having come with so many zealous supporters, he could not but fight, and fight to a finish.

Bhim and his Bilaspur troops led the first assault. They climbed up with enthusiasm but were tired by the time they reached the top. Instead of breaching the walls of the fortress, they shot their arrows only to hit the wooden rafts. It exhausted them all the more. Little wonder that when Kripal and his men came out and attacked them, Bhim Chand and his men retired to the base instead of giving a fight.

Bhim's second sally was even more unsuccessful than the first. Kripal Chand Katoch this time struck a severe blow and, instead of allowing an orderly retreat to Bhim's men, he pushed the combatants downhill. The result was that :

There standing in the plain below,
All the crowned chieftains with Bhim Chand
allied

Did gnash their teeth with ire of strong revenge
Smarting with pain of their shameful repulse

While on the eminence the foes, elate
With their gain, did gaily beat their drum.[21]

That enraged Bhim Chand and, invoking 'Hanuman', he exhorted all his associates including Guru Gobind to climb up the hill together.[22] The move succeeded completely when they breached the fortress and forced Alif Khan and his supporters to come out in the open and engage in a pitched battle.[23]

Perhaps because the leaders in the fortress had not anticipated the bold move, they began the battle in the open with a disadvantage. Kripal and his men found themselves surrounded by 'Nanglu, Panglu-Rajputs of varied sects and those of Jaswan and Guler', who pressed hard from all sides.[24] Dyal of Bijarwal, however, nearly turned the tables. He 'burst like a thundering storm, Helping the besieged so terribly'.[25] Bhim Chand and his allies might have been defeated and annihilated if at this critical juncture Guru Gobind had not played his part most effectively. When the Guru saw Dyal creating havoc, he took up his musket and fired at the 'heart' of the

Raja and followed it by shooting arrows in quick succession.[26] The Guru's example encouraged his side and their last minute but timely zeal helped them beat their opponents.

Alif Khan and his associates sought safety in flight. They crossed the river Beas and Bhim Chand's victory was complete. The hill collaborators of Bhim Chand and the Guru came back to their camps. Fearing the Mughal reprisal on their respective states, the Rajas and the commanders from Jaswan, Guler and the other states hurried back to their respective capitals. Guru Gobind stayed there for eight days and then marched with his followers to Anandpur.[27] Bhim Chand alone with his troops remained behind at Nadaun where soon after he was contacted by Kripal who, acting as an intermediary between Bhim Chand and Alif Khan, brought about an understanding between the two.

While still on their way to Anandpur-Makhowal, the Guru and his followers much to their dismay heard that Bhim Chand had entered into an agreement with Alif Khan.[28] The Guru in his *Bachittar Natak* does not tell us anything about the terms of agreement but from Bhim Chand's role in later years and the immediate reaction of the Guru's followers, it appears that Bhim Chand had agreed to pay the tribute, thereby to recognize Mughal suzerainty.

When in the hour of his victory, the greatest Hill Chief lost his nerve and betrayed his associates to demoralization and frustration, the reaction of the Guru and his followers can better be imagined than described. Guru Gobind's followers expressed their resentment by looting the inhabitants of Alsun.[29] The Guru kept his poise to do something more effective. On reaching Anandpur. he severed all connections with the Bilaspur Raja.

One reason why the Guru could do so was that, through his participation in the battle of Nadaun, he had won two friends in the Rajas Raj Singh and Ram Singh. Raj Singh's state, Jaswan, lay to the north of Anandpur and watched the only route that the Mughal *faujdar* at Kangra could take to harm the Guru at his headquarters. Guler lay towards the north west of Anandpur, linking the Guru with his devoted following in the present district of Hoshiarpur. He could not thus be easily threatened by Bhim Chand even with the Mughal support from Kangra.

The experience of Nadaun disillusioned Guru Gobind a great deal about the brave resolves and defiant poses of the Hill Rajas. It appears, therefore, that he could not hope to depend for long on the friendship of his two neighbours and continued to increase his strength. Perhaps the name Jujhar

Singh, which he gave to his son born soon after the battle of Nadaun, indicated his resolve to arm himself to stand on his own.[30]

Guru Gobind got three years of undisturbed peace to plan his way to greater armed strength unhampered. The Mughals having narrowly escaped the overthrow of their suzerainty would not risk another conflict for the time being. Bhim Chand, conscious alike of the Guru's invincibility at Anandpur and his own unpopularity with the Hill Rajas, was then perhaps afraid of him.

To give his 'army' a strong social base, the Guru gave a call to his followers not only to come to Anandpur in increasingly greater numbers every year but also to make the city their home. His earlier success at Bhangani and his role in beating the Mughal commander had invested him with a popularity and a halo unknown even to his great predecessors. Consequently his call evoked a great response and his establishment grew rapidly.

This changed the composition of Gobind's congregations. Instead of the devout disciples well grounded in Sikh philosophy and the learned Sikhs with their whole lives spent in the Guru's service, there would now be sitting before him idealistic youth and hardened soldiers, saintly figures and clever rouges along with the devout, but by no means learned, audience. The Guru's problem was to train this mixed and hetrogeneous assembly to a social conduct that should give Anandpur a decent look and to inspire his fresh followers to do great things.[31]

Guru Gobind instructed the ever swelling people making Anandpur their home to a 'good moral behaviour'[32] through a method widely practised by the religious guides of the medieval times. He would tell them tales specially chosen to warn them of the 'wiles of the perverse and the unscrupulous'.[33]

Guru Gobind selected his tales from a wide variety of sources so that cumulatively their appeal may be wide and deep. His tales were from the *Mahabharta* and *Ramayana*, from the *Puranas* as also from the *Panchatantra* and *Hitopadesh*. If he would relate immortal romances of the earlier times, he would occasionally also tell stories of crime and murder in the contemporary world.[34]

Guru Gobind Singh's so-called sexy tales have intrigued those scholars who have ignored their 'moral suggestiveness'.[35] It should not be forgotten that in tales of the idle women who were ill-matched or over-sexed, and of the royal *harem*, which was the hot bed of intrigues springing from sexual life, he only exposed the seamy side of the upper society.[36] He related the tales of 'beautiful women and their wiles' to exhort the youth around him not to give up their idealistic dreams for the 'bewitching beauty of women'.[37] In portraying the 'loosening of moral and social ties'[38] all around, his object was to strengthen those ties in his own establishment.

Guru Gobind Singh's responsibilities as the head of the rapidly growing township did not blind him to his duties to the *panth*. Once well settled at Anandpur, he took up the completion of the *Akal Ustat* in right earnest sometime in 1691[39]. We have already noted that he had begun writing this devotional poem in 1684 and, describing the attributes of God, he had depicted Him as 'Omnipresent, Omnipotent and Supreme, Timeless and All-steel'. He had then postponed its completion for maturer years.[40] Now, seven years older and the master of the *rasas* and *metres*, he carefully wrote the substantial part of the poem which, from the literary and philosophical points of view, is considered to be 'one of the best works of Gobind Singh'.[41] He used all his skill as a poet in writing this praise of God, using as many as twelve metres.[42]

Gobind's praise of God is full of beautiful 'gems of pure poetry', imbued with the *shant ras*.[43] One such piece often cited is *Jale Hari, Thale Hari, Ure Hari, Bane Hari*, ending in the trance of ecstacy: *tuhi, tuhi, tuhi, tuhi, tuhi, tuhi, tuhi, tuhi* i.e. Thou in Truth art *Thou, Thou, Thou, Thou, Thou* in Truth art Thou, Thou, Thou, Thou.[44] While writing this, Gobind must have lost himself in the most elevated state of realization, feeling the entire universe losing its separate entity and melting into the Supreme Being.

At the same time, the *Akal Ustat* contains the Guru's comment on the fundamentals of religions as also on the rituals of the times. The ten *sawayyas* constituting the second part of the *Akal Ustat*[45] dwell on worldly pomp, power, and valour; and on pilgrimage, yoga, charities and idol worship.[46] When later he added his comments on penances, austerities and practices of the various sects, he finally produced a work which was a beautiful 'mixture of ecclestical satires' interspersed with 'gems of pure poetry[47] Gobind's *Akal Ustat* was truly 'a marvellous composition, strong in diction, rich in poetic fancy and superb in imagery'.[48]

The Guru's success in the three years that followed the battle of Nadaun was phenomenal. His large congregations and rapidly increasing military strength seem to have so unnerved the Kangra *faujdar* and, possibly, a few Rajas that they sought Aurangzib's directions on how to meet the menace.

The Emperor, in response to this representation, directed his *faujdar* in November 1693 to prevent Gobind 'from assembling his Sikhs;[49] and that began a period of anxiety for Gobind which lasted for the next four years. The *faujdar* of Kangra, Dilawar Khan,[50] began a series of attacks with the intention of breaking the Guru's power at Anandpur.

Dilawar Khan first ordered his son, perhaps the commander of the Mughal contingent at Nadaun, to proceed against the Guru. The *khanzadah*, conscious of the difficult assignment given to him, made a surprize attack on the Guru's headquarters at Anandpur. On a dark and cold night in the winter of 1694, he crossed the Sutlej with a small contingent in the hope that he would take the Guru's headquarters by this surprize attack.

The *khanzadah*[51], as the Guru calls the son of the Kangra *faujdar* in the *Bachittar Natak*, had not calculated the watchfulness of Gobind's guards. His movements had remained hidden as long as he had not begun crossing the river. But the moment he had started crossing the river, the Guru came to know of it[52] and sounded the alarm. The beat on the

Guru's *nagara* started the booming of guns, the challenging shouts from the Sikhs in the fortresses and the movement of daring horsemen between one fortress and another to plan a concerted strategy for defeating the invader.[53] That unnerved the *khanzadah* and he hurriedly recrossed the river and moved back to Nadaun[54].

The next expedition was planned on a big scale and, strange as it may sound, that proved to be its undoing. Dilawar Khan chose Hussain Khan, perhaps the ablest commander with the Kangra *faujdar*[55] to lead it. He also successfully prevailed upon Kripal Chand, the brother of the Kangra Raja, to join it. It seems, however, that Dilawar Khan did not have enough finances and asked Hussain Khan to collect some sort of a war levy from the Hill Rajas on his way to Anandpur.[56]

In the beginning Hussain succeeded with most of the Chiefs and 'carried all before him'[57] but failed with the rajas of Guler and Jaswan. With the threatening force under him, he might well have succeeded even with these Chiefs but failed because of his tactlessness. When the two Rajas, then both at Guler, in fear of his large contingent tried to negotiate with him, he insulted them. We are told in the *Bachittar Natak* that he enclosed their troops 'for fifteen hours' and let 'no food' reach them[58]. The more the two Rajas tried to negotiate the more insistent Hussain Khan became on an exorbitant and unreasonable amount.[59] The result was that the two Rajas ultimately decided to fight and did so with 'the courage of desperation' which made their battle with Hussain to be the 'bloodliest of the series'.[60]

The battle began with Kripal attacking Raj Singh and the two fighting for some time like two husked elephants out to test their physical superiority[61]. It became a deadly affair when Himmat[62], Kimmat[63], and Kesri Singh of Jaswan joined the former[64] and Hari Singh stepped in to join the latter.[65]. It headed to a climax when the force under Dilawar Khan entered on Kripal's side.[66]

The battle raged furious for some time with guns and elephants thrown in to quicken the decision. The scales oscillated from one side to the other with Dilawar Khan standing a slightly better chance until Gajj Chand Chandel[67] arrived on the scene to fight for the Guler Raja.

Perhaps because the Chandel troops were fresh, they carried everything before them. They killed Kripal[68] and Himmat[69]. When they soon after killed Hussain Khan,[70] they won a victory for Guler and Jaswan Rajas that must have surprised them as much as the others.

This unexpected victory of the two Rajas was a providential escape for Guru Gobind at Anandpur. Little wonder that inspite of the death of 'Sangtia and his seven men,[71] he should have later written : 'The Lord Almighty with His saving hand Protected us and elsewhere made the clouds of missiles pour the rain of lethal blows'[72].

Dilawar Khan, in a bid to do something immediately to retrieve the Mughal reputation on the hills hurriedly sent Jujhar Singh and Chandel Rai towards Jaswan. The Rajput commanders of the *faujdar* moved to the strategic place of Bhallan[73] in that state and captured it from the Jaswan contingent. But before they could go farther, Gaj Singh of Jaswan was on them and inspite of the spirited fight that Jujhar Singh and Chandan Rai gave, he won an easy victory.[74]

The two defeats weakened the Mughal administration on the hills. If it was saved from a complete collapse, this was because of the news that Muazzam, the eldest son of Aurangzib was on his way to the Punjab to restore order in the north west.[75]

Muazzam did not come to Lahore, as the Hill Rajas feared he would, for another year.[76] This encouraged many of the Hill Rajas to rebel against the Mughal authority. They did it with a zeal and enthusiasm that seems to have attracted a good many of the Guru's followers from Anandpur. But the Guru, remembering the experience of Nadaun, remained aloof.

Muazzam came to Lahore sometime in August 1696 and from there directed operations against the Hill Rajas. As was perhaps natural, his entire wrath fell on the Hill Chiefs. He left the Guru's headquarters unharmed.[77]

Muazzam's departure from Lahore ended the Guru's anxiety and he now intensified his efforts to discover himself and his true mission. Gobind had all along been thinking deeply about his role in the moral world, which was only natural for the occupant of 'Nanak's *gaddi*'. He extended his enquiry to all the known *avatars* of Vishu, Shiva and Rudra[78] and closely examined the whole range of classics with special emphasis on the *Ramayan* and the *Mahabharat*. He invited new enterants to his literary *darbar*,[79] already enriched with the return of the 'five Sikhs' who had been sent to Banaras in 1686[80]. He encouraged them to translate the relevant portions of the *Ramayan* and the *Mahabharat*[81] to leave no room for any ambiguity and doubt in comprehending the *avatars* not only in all their glory but also their weakness.

It is significant that his examination of the *avatars* synchronised with the writing of the *Bachittar Natak*, his autobiography.[82] It is evident that he had begun seeing himself in the image of an *avatar*. To him the *natak* and *leela* of his own life bore a close resemblance to the activities of saviours of earlier times.

Gobind must have felt inspired on discovering himself in that light. But to be doubly sure on the point, he planned the *Bachittar Natak Granth* [83] to underline the common factor of all the saviours, including himself. He composed verses on the lives of *avatars* and once more turned to Durga, 'an incarnation of Bhagauti (Sword) who is herself a symbol of power'.[84]

Behind Gobind's feverish literary activity between 1697 and 1699, there was the restlessness of a soul struggling hard to come to some important decision. To those who were intimately connected with him, it must have foreshadowed some great step. The Hill Rajas and Mughal *faujdars*, however, could not have guessed what Gobind was thinking in these years. When they heard of the birth of Gobind's third son early in 1697[85] and of another two years later,[86] they might have imagined that Gobind was settling down to a quiet and peaceful life.

VI

The Chastening Baptism

The closing years of the seventeenth century, in which Guru Gobind Singh was free from armed conflict, were by no means the years of inactivity. Much of his time off from the usual pontifical duties was spent in literary activity, and more in pondering over his present situation as the leader of a socio-religious fraternity. It was during this outwardly peaceful interval that he instituted the Khalsa on the 30th of March in 1699.

Looking for a right perspective to the institution of the Khalsa,[1] it must be remembered that Guru Gobind Singh was an heir to a religious mission. Upon his shoulders had fallen the task of upholding a faith which had been created and cherished by a long line of predecessors among whom was his martyred father. He had succeeded to an office which involved responsibilities going far beyond personal considerations. By 1699, he had held that grave office for over twenty years and, amidst a varied experience of religion and politics, he had thought deeply about the nature of religious missions and about his own role as a religious leader. As already noted, for over ten years before the Khalsa was instituted Guru Gobind Singh had remained pre-occupied with the nature of providential intervention in moral affairs through the instrumentality of God's creatures ordained for that purpose.[2]

What must be firmly grasped first is Guru Gobind Singh's fundamental assumption that the foremost duty of all created beings was to worship the Creator of the universe, and Him alone. It is on this assumption that the moral failure of God's heavenly and earthly creatures is underlined in Guru Gobind Singh's presentation of the universe in which tradition, myth, legend and meta-history are interwoven. The failure of the creatures in general consisted chiefly in their forgetfulness of the Creator; and the failure of the divinely appointed instruments consisted in their interposing themselves between God and His creatures. The demons :[3]

Ceased to worship Me, the Supreme Being,
and the gods :

Called themselves supreme beings,
and among the human beings, whosoever was clever :

Established his own sect,

And no one found the Creator.

This last category included the Sidhs, the Sadhs, the Rishis, the authors of the Vedas, Datatariya, Gorakhnath, Ramanand and Muhammad.

It may not be superfluous to underline that from Guru Gobind Singh's point of view there was no justification for identifying the divinely appointed instruments with God Himself. Guru Gobind Singh's interest in the *avatars* must not be confused with his belief in them. In the 1680's when he was composing the *Krishan Avtar*, he had made it clear that :[4]

> I do not at the outset propitiate Ganesh;
>
> I never meditate on Krishan or Vishnu;
>
> I have heard of them but I know them not;
>
> It is only God's feet I love.

Similarly, when in 1698 he completed the *Ram Avtar*, he was anxious to reiterate :[5]

> The Puran of Ram (the God of the Hindus)
>
> and the Quran of Rahim (the God of the Musalmans)
>
> express various opinions, but I accept none of of them.

> The Simritis, the Shastras,
>
> and the Veds all expound many different doctrines, but I accept none of them.

Guru Gobind Singh's complete dependence upon the One True Lord, as much as his belief in Him, was expressed in the often quoted closing verse of the *Ram Avtar*[6] :

> Forsaking all other doors I have clung to Thine.
>
> It is to Thine honour to protect me whose arms Thou hast grasped; Gobind is Thy slave.

In Guru Gobind Singh's world-view, amidst the ceaseless rhythm of life and death in the universe, which had originally emanated from God and would ultimately be absorbed in Him, the forces of evil and good were continuously at work and God intervened in this cosmic drama from time to time to uphold good against evil. In the *Akal Ustat*, Guru Gobind Singh had depicted this incessant flow of life and death :[7]

> There are many that swim and many that waddle,
>
> And many that eat them up,

There are myriad birds — the feathery beings
That in a trice can take to wings.
But up in the sky are many others
That on these warblers sup,
Where are the waters, where the land
And where the vaulted blue,
Yet all that "Time" has brought forth
Both "Time" itself subdue,
As darkness mingles with the light
As light embraces dark,
All will at last dissolve in Him
From whom they got the spark.

In the *Chandi di Var* was portrayed 'a titanic struggle during the hoary age of mythology, between the forces of Evil and Good in which divine aid weighs the scales in favour of the Good'.[8] In the *Ram Avtar*, which was completed almost on the eve of instituting the Khalsa, the cosmic setting provided for the *avatar* of Ram is the dominance of the *asuras* over the *devtas*; and Ram was born to subdue the former.[9] On the historical plane, as Guru Gobind Singh states explicitly elsewhere, *asuras* were the evil-doers and *devtas* were simply those men whose deeds were good : 'The man whose deeds are saintly is designated as *devta* in the world; but those who commit misdeeds are dubbed by all as *asuras*,.[10] In the introductory *chaupais* of the *Chaubis Avtar*, Guru Gobind

Singh assumes that the true saints were always rewarded and the evil-doers were ultimately punished.[11]

The *avatars*, depending upon the gravity of situation in human affairs, could make a legitimate use of physical force in favour of the good. Two such *avatars* were Krishan and Ram; and they appear to have held a peculiar fascination for Guru Gobind Singh.[12] The power which was manifested through the human instrumentality of *avatars* was God's, for an important attribute of God, in Guru Gobind Singh's view, was precisely this power.[13] In the *Chandi di Var*, for instance :[14]

> God having first fashioned the Sword created the whole world.
>
> He created Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiv and made them the sport of His Omnipotence;
>
> He made the seas and mountains of the earth, and supported the firmament without pillars;
>
> He made the demons and the demigods, and excited dissension among them.
>
> Having created Durga, O God, Thou didst destroy the demons.
>
> From Thee alone Ram received his power, and slew Rawan with his arrows.

From Thee alone Krishan received his power,
seized

Kans by the hair, and dashed him on ground.

A timely adjustment between the forces of evil and good through the use of physical force was an essential ingredient of the moral world; for, God could not tolerate the unhappiness of His saints who must be protected from the wicked[15]. The idea that God protected the good and cast down the wicked had been expressed already by Guru Nanak.[16] Guru Gobind Singh explicitly states that God became miserable over the misery of His saints and He felt happy over the happiness of the righteous :

Santan dukh pai te dukhi
Sukh pai sadhan te sukhi
(*Benati Chaupai*)

In the context of these few, but basic, ideas must be viewed Guru Gobind Singh's presentation of his own mission in the *Bachittar Natak* which was composed not long before he instituted the Khalsa. He traces the descent of both the Bedis and Sodhis significantly from Ram. Coming thus from a providential stock, they were presumably to play in the *kaliyuga* a role similar to that of Ram in a previous *yuga.* Guru Gobind Singh presented Baba Nanak indeed as the saviour of the *kaliyuga.*[17]

> He established religion in the Kal age,
> And showed the way unto all holy men.
> Sin never troubleth those
> Who follow in his footsteps.
> God removeth all suffering and sin
> From those who embrace his religion.

It may be pointed out that this was the religion of Guru Gobind Singh and his followers at the time of his writing the *Bachittar Natak.*

As the true successor of Nanak, Guru Gobind Singh believed himself to have been chosen by God to establish His *panth* by bringing men to their sense of duty towards God.[18]

> The divine Guru sent me for religion's sake;
> On this account I have come into the world —
> 'Extend the faith everywhere;
> Seize and destroy the evil and the sinful'.
> Understand this, ye holymen, in your souls.
> I assumed birth for the purpose
> Of spreading the faith, saving the saints,
> And extirpating all tyrants.

As God's servant (he is anxious to assert that he was a mere man !), Guru Gobind Singh was to deliver His message without fear of any one and without enmity towards any one.[19] Thus, in supersession of all previous dispensations, he was to make the worship of the Supreme Being prevail everywhere, to raise the saints of God and to subdue the evil-doers, the enemies of God.

However, the identification of the enemies of God with the personal enemies of Guru Gobind Singh, though tempting, would be misleading. Guru Gobind Singh had no respect for Aurangzib and was unwilling to owe allegiance to any temporal lord; but the Mughal Emperors were not necessarily 'the enemies of God' for, it was through divine dispensation that the sovereignty of the temporal realm had come to belong to the successors of Babur, just as sovereignty of the spiritual realm belonged to the successors of Nanak.[20] In the description of his battles with the Hill Rajas and the Mughal commandants, Guru Gobind Singh betrays no bitterness against his enemies. But he is nonetheless keen to attribute his victories and safety to God's protective hand over a person fighting for the right cause.[21] Those of his followers and allies who had betrayed the Guru's cause were worse than those who had opposed him openly in the field of battle.[22]

The *Bachittar Natak* was indeed a justification as well as an enunciation of Guru Gobind Singh's mission. Towards its close, Guru Gobind Singh's condemnation of the renegades is remarkable[23] :

> Those who turn their faces away from the Guru
> Their homes are demolished in this world and
> the next.

and

> Those who turn away from the Guru's path
> Their faces are blackened in this world and the
> next.

Guru Gobind Singh's primary emphasis in the *Bachittar Natak* was, thus, on the justness of his cause and the necessity of espousing it.

This is not to say however that Guru Gobind Singh was indifferent to external interference with the affairs of the Sikh *panth.* Though it is difficult to pin-point 'the enemy' in terms of institutions or communities, Guru Gobind Singh's anxiety about 'the enemy' in general is understandable. For about ten years he had fought in battles or lived in the shadow of war; and some past events as well as the events of his life time were always there to remind him of opposition to the faith of Nanak and its upholders.

Thus, we find Guru Gobind Singh convinced of his providential role to fulfil, in his own way, the mission of Nanak, and also conscious that he could not do so without meeting obstruction and opposition. His problem was to defend the claims of conscience against external interference.

To defend the claims of conscience against external interference, Guru Gobind Singh had first to set his own house in order. The *masands*, who at one time were the representative agents of the Guru with something of his delegated authority, were an important link between the Guru and a large number of the Sikhs. In the organisation of the Sikh *panth*, much depended upon their faithful co-operation but they appear to have lost Guru Gobind Singh's confidence. The Sikh tradition is full of anecdotes or incidents through which their general dishonesty, callous indifference or downright oppression is portrayed.[24] This is evident also from two of Guru Gobind Singh's *ThirtyThree Sawwaiyas* :[25]

> If any one serve the masands, they will say,
> 'Fetch and give us all thy offerings.
> Go at once and make a present to us of
> whatever property is there in thy house.
> Think on us night and day, and mention
> not others even by mistake'.
> If they hear of any one giving, they run to

him even at night, they are not at all
pleased at not receiving.

Again :

They put oil into their eyes to make
people believe that they are shedding tears.
If they see any of their own worshippers
wealthy, they serve up sacred food
and feed him with it.
If they see him without wealth, they
give him nothing, though he beg for
it; they will not even show him
their faces.
Those beasts plunder men, and
never sing the praises of the Supreme Being.

Thus, in Guru Gobind Singh's indictment of the *masands*, they appear to be a despicable lot, preferring their mundane self-interest over their obligations towards the Guru and the Sikhs. The inconvenient mediacy of the *masands* was all the more undesirable for their influence with a considerable number of the Sikhs. Guru Gobind Singh decided to establish a direct connection with the Sikhs by removing all those *masands* whose integrity or loyalty was questionable.

The Guru's direct link with his Sikhs, though dictated largely by the historical situation in which Guru Gobind Singh found himself in the late 1690's, was not without a precedent. Even in the time of Guru Hargobind, the Sikhs who were directly linked with the Guru were known as his *khalsa.*[26] The earliest biographer of Guru Gobind Singh attaches precisely this meaning to the term *khalsa*: he equates the 'purification of the world' with the 'removal of the *masands*'; and the relationship which then came to be established between the Sikhs and Guru Gobind Singh reminded his biographer of the Crown-lands (the *khalisah*) of the contemporary Mughal rulers.[27] This direct link was all the more important for ensuring a regular supply of cash and goods to the Guru at a time when he was in great need of them. In most of the *hukamnamas* issued by Guru Gobind Singh to the Sikh *sangats* after the Baisakhi of 1699, the Sikhs are asked to send their offerings directly to their Guru through authorized persons (not the *masands*) or to bring them personally to Anandpur. They are also asked not to associate themselves with the *masands* and their followers.[28] Indeed, the earliest evidence available on the point leaves us in no doubt that the removal of the *masands* was one of the primary objectives of Guru Gobind Singh.[29]

In a bold yet systematic manner, Guru Gobind Singh decided to put his premeditated plan into operation in 1699. No other day could be more auspicious than a Baisakhi day on which many Sikhs as well as the *masands* used to visit Anandpur; and this year they were specially asked to come.[30] On the Baisakhi of 1969 thus, the gathering at Anandpur was unusually large.[31] The form of Guru Gobind Singh's address to the assembly was also unusual: expounding the basic tenets of his faith, he appears to have asked the Sikhs at some stage to offer their lives for the sake of their *dharma*.[32] For several generations they had been taught to do this for their Guru and many of the devoted Sikhs had risked their lives for Guru Gobind Singh himself; but never had the Sikhs been put to the test so literally and apparently without a cause. Offers did come one by one but after a natural suspense and a good deal of hesitation. Guru Gobind Singh stopped repeating the demand after the number of offers had reached five, a number which had a mystical sanctity for the Sikhs. These five Sikhs, who came to be known as the five-beloved (*panj pyare*)[34], were given the baptism of the double-edged sword (*khande ki pahul*);[35] and they in turn were asked to administer *pahul* to all those who would taste the new baptism on the unambiguous assumption that their lives henceforth were to be consecrated to the cause of the Guru alone. Through this chastening baptism at Anandpur on the Baisakhi of 1699, the nucleus of Guru Gobind Singh's Khalsa had come into existence.

The first duty of the Khalsa was an unqualified worship of the One True Lord, as it was set out by Guru Gobind Singh already in his *Jap, Akal Ustat* and other compositions.[36] This is evident from the *Sawwaiya* in which a direct reference is made to the Khalsa :[37]

> He who repeateth night and day the name of
> Him
> whose enduring light is unquenchable, who
> bestoweth not a thought on any but the
> one God;
>
> Who hath full love and confidence in God,
> who putteth not faith even by mistake in
> fasting, or worshipping cemetries, places of
> cremation, or jogis' places of sepulture;
>
> Who only recognizeth the one God and not
> pilgrimages, alms, the non-destruction
> of life, Hindu penances or austerities;
>
> And in whose heart the light of the Perfect
> One shineth, he is recognized as
> a pure member of the Khalsa.

It is often suggested that the new baptism, in contrast with the *charan-pahul*, symbolised power and glory for the Khalsa.[38] However, the change was not so dramatic as it is supposed to be. Here again, Guru Gobind Singh was improving upon some important modifications which had been introduced by the time of Guru Hargobind: the washing of the Guru's feet in the water to be used for baptism had been discarded and a body of five Sikhs had been permitted to initiate a person into Sikhism.[39] The only distinguishing mark of the *khande ki pahul*, as the name suggests, was the use of the double-edged sword in its preparation. The *khanda* did not symbolise power or glory so much as the determination of the Khalsa to identify themselves in public and, *if necessary*, to defend the claims of their conscience with physical force. It may be pointed out in this connection that in the often quoted verse of Guru Gobind Singh's *Zafarnama :*

Chun kar az hamah hilate dar guzasht
Halal ast burdan be shamshir dast

(When all other alternatives fail, it is lawful to resort to the sword),

the emphasis is on the *last resort* rather than on the use of arms. Thus, the use of arms primarily in self-defence was sanctified through the chastening baptism.

The courage with which the Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh were expected to defend what was dear to them was symbolished also by the epithet *singh* which was to become an integral part of their names. Even before 1699, Guru Gobind Singh had used the term metaphorically for some of his Sikhs ;[40] and even after 1699 some of his acknowledged *khalsa* had not adopted the epithet as a part of their names. This is evident from some of the *hukamnamas* of Guru Gobind Singh in which the Sikhs are addressed specifically as 'my *khalsa*', though all the names given in these letters do not have the epithet *singh.*[41] It must therefore be pointed out that, though the *khalsa* was identified with the Sikh, it was not yet necessarily identical with the Singh. Nevertheless, all those who tasted the *pahul* were given the appellation of *singh.*

It has been suggested that the term *singh* had its very ancient connotation of perfection in faith.[42] However, its currency among the contemporary Rajputs appears to have been suggestive. Guru Gobind Singh was acutely conscious of his *chhatri* lineage[43]. In the *Sawwaiya* "*Jokichh-lekh – likhio*", there is a clear implication that the Khalsa were equated with the *kshatriyas* and, significantly, without any aid or sanction from the Brahmans. From Guru Gobind Singh's point of view the Order of the Khalsa could be identified with the *kshatriyas* in so far as the obligation to fight, albeit for a different cause, was there. There was however a fundamental difference:

even in the ideal Hindu social order the *kshatriyas* formed only one of its *varnas*, but in the ideal Sikh social order there was to be only one *varna*, the Order of the Khalsa itself. The inception of this single-caste order obliterated the differences of former creeds or castes for those who accepted the baptism of the double-edged sword. Ghulam Hussain's later observation on the Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh appears to be very significant ; he says that people :[44]

> when once admitted into that fraternity, never make any difficulty of mixing or communicating with one another, of whatever tribe or clan or race they may have been hitherto ; nor do they ever betray anything of those scruples, precautions,and antipathies and customs, so deeply rooted in the Gentoo mind, whatever diversity or opposition there may have hitherto been in their tenets, principles, or common way of life.

The Order of the Khalsa did not fall into any of the known categories of contemporary social order. Like Guru Gobind Singh himself, his baptised Sikhs were to wear their *keshas* as well as arms.[45] The keeping of uncut hair was no doubt the most important injunction of Guru Gobind Singh for his Khalsa.[46] The ceremonies connected with *bhaddan*, which involved the cutting of hair, had naturally to be abandoned. In due course, a well formulated *rehat* came to be prescribed and the Khalsa were expected to conduct their personal and social life in accordance with that *rehat*.[47] Thus, not only in their inward belief but also in their personal appearance and social observances, the baptised Sikhs of Guru Gobind Singh stood distinguished from the majority of their contemporaries. The socio- religious identity of the Order of the Khalsa became more distinctly pronounced than that of the Sikhs of the earlier days. In the words of the contemporary biographer of Guru Gobind Singh, the Khalsa stood distinguished from the rest of the world.[48]

The Order of the Khalsa, though historically the culmination of a long process, had radical sociological implications. Guru Gobind Singh's measures caught the imagination of a large number of Sikhs, but not of all. The *masands* would naturally be opposed to measures which were aimed at reducing their importance and which undermined their privileged position in the Sikh *panth*. On the Baisakhi day itself, only a part of the gathering had accepted the baptism of the double-edged sword.[49] The Khatris and the Brahmans were particularly reluctant to accept the baptism which involved the levelling of caste distinctions and, eventually, the loss of status in the existing social order.[50] The later chroniclers appear to be justified in emphasising that the majority of those who accepted the new measures belonged to the lower castes.[51] The Jats of the Punjab now became more predominant in the Sikh *panth* than ever before.

The institution of the Khalsa created a great stir in the body-social of the Sikhs themselves. This is vividly depicted by the earliest biographer of Guru Gobind Singh. Some of the Sikhs who had not gone to Anandpur refused to believe that the Guru had given any new injunctions; some of them demanded that the Guru himself should write to them; and some others did accept the *pahul* and the essential *rehat*. This situation led at places to dissension among the Sikhs; and at others, it resulted in tension between the Sikhs and the non-Sikhs, leading to intervention by the officials of the Mughal Government.[52] Some of the cautious but nonetheless zealous Sikhs went to Anandpur to taste the chastening baptism, while some of the irresponsibly zealous who had accepted the *pahul* at the spur of the moment renounced the *rehat* under trying social sanctions. In Guru Gobind Singh's life time the Khalsa remained larger than the Singh, though, his preference for the latter was unmistakable. His great qualities as a leader come into high relief when it is realized that his chief instrument in carrying his Sikhs along with him was persuasion.[53]

Guru Gobind Singh's consideration for the Khalsa increased in direct proportion to his dependence upon them. The Guru's regard for his Sikhs was an old thing; but with a great difference. Guru Gobind Singh articulates his feelings about the Khalsa in one of the *Hazare Shabad* in which his appreciation for them is juxtaposed with his decision to do his best for them :[54]

All the battles I have won against tyranny
I have fought with the devoted backing of these people;
Through them only have I been able to bestow gifts,
Through their help I have escaped from harm;
The love and generosity of these Sikhs
Have enriched my heart and my home.
Through their grace I have attained all learning;
Through their help in battle I have slain all my enemies.
I was born to serve them, through them I reached eminence.
What would I have been without their kind and ready help ?
There are millions of insignificant people like me ?
True service is the service of these people.
I am not inclined to serve others of higher caste;
Charity will bear fruit in this and the next world,

If given to such worthy people as these;
All other sacrifices and charities are profitless.
From top to toe, whatever I call my own,
All I possess and carry, I dedicate to these people!'

This consideration of Guru Gobind Singh for his Khalsa need not be interpreted in personal terms. Just as the Guru in his own eyes was the chosen instrument of God for 'restraining men from senseless acts', so his Khalsa were the willing agents for working out that mission. Thus, through the Guru, the Khalsa belonged to God; and *Wahguru ji ka Khalsa* deserved all the consideration which Guru Gobind Singh might bestow upon them.

The mutual regard, consideration and devotion between the Guru and his Khalsa has been trenchantly expressed by the later chroniclers in their statement that the Guru henceforth was the Khalsa and the Khalsa were the Guru.[55] Though a culmination of the relationship between the Sikh Gurus and their devoted disciples, the increased importance of the Khalsa is understandable largely in terms of the new situation which had arisen after the institution of the Khalsa. Not only at Anandpur but also at other places, five Sikhs in a body were allowed to initiate others into the Order of the Khalsa. Though the Sikhs were directly linked with the Guru, he was not in a position to supervise the affairs of all the Khalsa *sangats*. Some of his authority was delegated to the *sangats* themselves. The former importance of the *masands* belonged now to the *sangats* who could not only initiate others into the fold but also take collective decisions regarding the conduct of individual members who were obliged to be bound by those decisions if they wished to remain the true Sikhs of Guru Gobind Singh.[56] The Khalsa *sangats* became sacrosanct because of the authority which they could now legitimately claim to have. The Khalsa *sangat* as a collective body thus appeared to be equated with the Guru himself.

That a symbolical equation between the Guru and the Khalsa could be posed is evident from a contemporary interpretation of Guru Gobind Singh's mission. It was believed that one could receive the grace of inclination towards the right path through association with the true Sikhs in the *sangat*[57]. The uniqueness of the Khalsa *sangat* appeared to consist in the efficacy of its collective prayers to God.[58] The sanctity of the *sangat* buttressed its authority over its individual members whose personal faults or social lapses could be punished or forgiven by the *sangat*.[59] Thus, the difference between a collective body of the Khalsa and the Guru was only of a degree. Indeed, the *sangat* could explicitly be equated with the Guru :[60]

Gur sangat kichh bhed na hoi;

(there is no difference between the Guru and the *sangat*)

because,

satgur sangat ek hai
(the *sangat* and the true Guru are one and the same).

By instituting the Khalsa, Guru Gobind Singh re-affirmed the faith promulgated by Nanak, consolidated the Sikh *panth* to withstand any external interference, inspired his Sikhs to defend the claims of their conscience at the risk of their lives, and enabled them to stand on their own feet as a corporate body. In this process, he sharpened the distinct socio-religious character of the Sikh *panth*. More than ever before the activities of Guru Gobind Singh's Sikhs now appeared to be fraught with political implications, and the stage was set for a deeper conflict with the contemporary powers. On the Baisakhi of 1699, Guru Gobind Singh may be said to have taken the most vital decision of his life : the Order of the Khalsa was likely to invite the interference which it was meant to withstand.

VII

The Trial of Strength

A news-letter of 16th April, 1699, refers to a report brought by the imperial messenger who had been sent to the *faujdar* of Sarhind with instructions 'to admonish' Guru Gobind.[1] The report appears to have allayed the apprehension of Aurangzib that the convoking of a large number of Sikhs at Anandpur might have some immediate political concussion.

By 1699, Aurangzib was irrevocably committed to the cause of the Empire in the south. As he himself once put it,[2] to capture the Deccan had become absolutely important and all his energy and thought were consumed by that objective; the way to it was opened through God's grace; but the availability of money that had been spent, and was being spent, in that venture depended upon the treasury of Hindustan; and it was therefore necessary to exact all amounts from whomsoever they were due, as it had been done in the past. Just as the success of Aurangzib's arms in the south depended upon the treasuries of the north, so the replenishment of those treasuries depended upon the conditions of peace. Public disorders involved among other things a grave financial insecurity, which the Emperor wished to obviate as far as possible.

Under these circumstances he was quick to take a personal interest in the activity of the son and successor of Teg Bahadur, particularly on the eve of the Baisakhi of 1699; but as the great gathering at Anandpur had passed off peacefully, the Emperor by the same token could afford to rest content with instructing the *faujdar* of Sarhind to be watchful of the Guru of the *Nanak-panthis*[3].

For about two years Guru Gobind Singh was left free to consolidate his new position. It was during this extended interval of peace that the newly baptised Sikhs had returned from Anandpur to broadcast wherever they went the tidings of what had happend on the Baisakhi day; small parties of the Khalsa had gone to the Sikhs in the towns and the villages of the Punjab to administer to all those who would taste the baptism of the double-edged sword. Though a *masand* of unquestionable integrity, like Bhai Des Raj of the village Phaphre, could return from Anandpur with the Guru's letter of authority to continue collecting the voluntary offerings of the Sikhs, the majority of the *masands* had been disowned as well by the Khalsa as by their Guru. The Khalsa *sangat* of the village Naushehra–

Pannuan, for instance, was asked first not to give their offerings to any one except a person specifically authorized by the Guru and then they were asked not to believe in the *masands* and not to have any association with their followers.[4] The Khalsa were also urged to visit Anandpur.

In due course the Khalsa were urged to visit Anandpur fully armed.[5] Besides the obligation of wearing arms as a part of the essential *rehat*, these instructions were necessitated by the attitude of the Mughal officials; they obstructed the Khalsa on the way to their Guru with a view to obviating any potential trouble. The Khalsa nevertheless wended their way to Anandpur, particularly at the times of Baisakhi, Diwali and Holi.[6] This periodical concourse of the Khalsa at Anandpur, besides the daily congregation, could not remain unnoticed for a long time.

The first to take a serious notice of Guru Gobind Singh's Khalsa at Anandpur was his old antagonist Bhim Chand Kahluria, the neighbouring Chief of Bilaspur. More than ever before he now saw in the armed Sikhs of the Guru a potential threat to the integrity of his dominions.[7] Ever since the arrival of Muazzam in the north west, Bhim

Chand had wisely curbed his pretentions of overthrowing the yoke of Mughal suzerainty; and thereby, he had proved himself to be a faithful vassal of the Mughal Empire. Jealous of his cabined authority, he decided to re-assert his circumscribed power by claiming to be the 'overlord' of Anandpur. By the turn of the century, thus, Guru Gobind Singh and his Khalsa were being challenged to a trial of strength with one of the most powerful vassals of Aurangzib in the Punjab hills.

Guru Gobind Singh was asked once again to pay tribute to the Chief of Bilaspur. This old but nonetheless diplomatic move was calculated to oblige the Guru to take up the gauntlet. Guru Gobind Singh on his part once again refused to admit any justification for this old demand; and by his refusal, accepted the challenge thrown out to him by his old adversary. Bhim Chand was left with the alternative of making good his claim 'at the point of the spear.'[8]

Though the most powerful of the Punjab Hill Chiefs on this side of the Sutlej, Bhim Chand with his limited resources could not hope to enforce his claim single-handed, particularly in face of the strategically advantageous position of Anandpur as much as the fighting qualities of the Sikhs of Guru Gobind Singh. The refusal of their Guru to acknowledge the authority of the Chief of Bilaspur could be used, however, as an argument with some of the other Hill Chiefs to persuade them to move against a dangerous neighbour. Bhim Chand found an active ally in the Chief of Hindur who was equally apprehensive of the growing strength of Guru Gobind Singh close to the borders of Hindur.[9]

The allied troops of the Hill Chiefs laid siege to Anandpur, but only to find the Khalsa ready for active resistance. Ajit Singh, the eldest son of Guru Gobind Singh, was among those who led sorties for a few days and inflicted heavy losses on the enemy. The Hill Chiefs were soon despaired of capturing Anandpur. According to Saina Pat, they appealed to the Guru's sense of chivalry by requesting him to leave Anandpur to them as the *gao-bhat*, that is, the food for the cow.[10] Bhim Chand thus appears to have come to some kind of a compromise which was not dishonourable to him.

Consequently, Guru Gobind Singh left Anandpur and established himself at a place called Nirmoh. The neighbouring villages which belonged to Kahlur had to be brought under control to accommodate the increasing numbers of the Khalsa. This might have been a part of the understanding reached with Bhim Chand, but the Khalsa met resistance in these villages and had to fight. In one of these skirmishes was killed Sahib Chand, one of the heroes of Bhangani, and a fierce fight raged over his body. The Khalsa succeeded in bringing his corpse back to Nirmoh where it was cremated. With the death of Sahib Chand the struggle with the opposing villagers became serious and the Khalsa became more aggressive. Several of the neighbouring villages were evacuated by their inhabitants. Bhim Chand felt perturbed, but he was helpless. Left to his own resources he could not move against Guru Gobind Singh and his Khalsa without seriously risking his prestige and position, if not his life.

Before the end of 1701, Bhim Chand was obliged to invoke the aid of his suzerain, the Mughal Government. It is not clear whether his appeal was made to Aurangzib in the south, to Muazzam at Kabul or the Mughal Governor at Delhi, whether directly or through the *faujdar* of Sarhind.[11] In any case, Mughal contingents arrived in due course at Sarhind to collaborate with its *faujdar*. He had been instructed to aid the vassal Chief of Bilaspur against the Guru of the *Nanak-panthis*.[12] In all probability Guru Gobind Singh was aware of this development; he had certainly made preparations to meet an attack on Nirmoh. In the beginning of 1702, we find him urging the Khalsa in the villages of the Punjab to go to Anandpur fully armed.[13] Apart from retaining some of the Khalsa who would normally come to have his *darshan*, he had invited daring men from several towns and villages, given them arms and enlisted them as his soldiers.[14] Thus, he was ready to meet the allied troops.

An indecisive but important battle was fought at Nirmoh. It was attacked by Bhim Chand from one side and by the Mughal commandants from the other. The Gujjars, probably of the neighbouring villages who had suffered at the hands of the Khalsa, joined hands with the invaders.[15] Their swelled numbers became much larger than those of the Khalsa. In Saina Pat's simile, the enemy surrounded Nirmoh as the stars surround the moon. But the Khalsa fought valliantly and 'blood flowed like streams in the rainy season'. The contest lasted for about twenty-four hours before the Khalsa got some respite from the enemy's vigorous attack. Guru Gobind Singh was obliged to evacuate Nirmoh, probably because of the use of cannon by the Mughal *faujdar*.[16]

Guru Gobind Singh decided to lead his Khalsa across the river Sutlej into a friendly territory. But before they could cross the river they were overtaken by the allies who were naturally keen to obstruct the passage. The Khalsa fought desperately for three to four hours and succeeded eventually in crossing the river into the territories of the Chief of Jaswan who was an old ally of Guru Gobind Singh. The Guru and the Khalsa went to the town of Basoli, to the north of the river Sutlej (and not across the Beas into the territories of the Chief of Basohli, as it is generally but wrongly believed).

The Mughal troops returned to Sarhind with the doubtful satisfaction of having achieved at a great cost the limited objective of expelling the Khalsa from the territories of Kahlur on the eastern side of the Sutlej.[17]

Bhim Chand was nevertheless elated with this partial success; and though he had no Mughal contingents now to supplement his own resources in men or munition, he was enthusiastic enough to pursue Guru Gobind Singh. The Guru's losses in the battles of Nirmoh could encourage the Hill Chief in his pursuit. But the Khalsa at Basoli were strong enough to repel the troops of Kahlur. Bhim Chand's men fled from the battle-field 'as the arrow flies from a stretched bow.'

Some time after the battle of Basoli Guru Gobind Singh took initiative against Bhim Chand by leading incursions into his territories on the north of the river Sutlej. He gradually moved towards Anandpur, still remaining on the other side of the river. At this time some of his men were waylaid by the inhabitants of Kalmot. Guru Gobind Singh was apprised of this and returned to the aid of the Sikhs.

They laid siege to the fortress of Kalmot. Its inhabitants were unable to withstand the attack of the Khalsa and evacuated the place after a feeble resistance. The fortress was occupied by Guru Gobind Singh. Sometime later the Kalmotians returned under cover of darkness to attack but, as the day dawned, they were again unable to withstand a sortie by the Khalsa and withdrew from the battle-field.

The capture of Kalmot by Guru Gobind Singh was a matter of grave concern to Bhim Chand who now feared a continued aggression by the Khalsa on the territories of Kahlur, particularly when the Jaswal Chief was in open alliance with the Guru. Bhim Chand, almost sure that Guru Gobind Singh would cross the river into Anandpur, was now anxious to come to an amicable understanding with him.[18] The diplomacy of the astute Hill Chief yielded to the solid strength of the Khalsa, and Guru Gobind Singh recrossed the river Sutlej to regain possession of Anandpur, probably by the middle of 1702.

Back at Anandpur, Guru Gobind Singh was left free to strengthen his position for over two years. The fortifications of this 'abode of happiness' were improved for the purposes of defence; and some of the Sikhs were probably trained to make use of small cannon. The Khalsa had started coming for the Guru's *darshan* regularly as before. Their association with the veterans of the then recent war had inspired them with a new enthusiasm which was carried back to the Khalsa *sangats* in numerous villages and towns of the Punjab. The Khalsa started visiting Anandpur in larger numbers and more frequently than before. Their concourse created the problem of supplies. Their need, combined with their new temper, resulted in the 'conquest' of all the neighbouring villages.[19]

To all appearances Guru Gobind Singh and his Khalsa were becoming more formidable than ever before.[20] They were more aggressive too. The Khalsa horsemen rode into the neighbouring villages to levy contributions in kind from the reluctant inhabitants. The authority of the Hill Chiefs, of Bhim Chand in particular, was thus openly defied by the Khalsa.

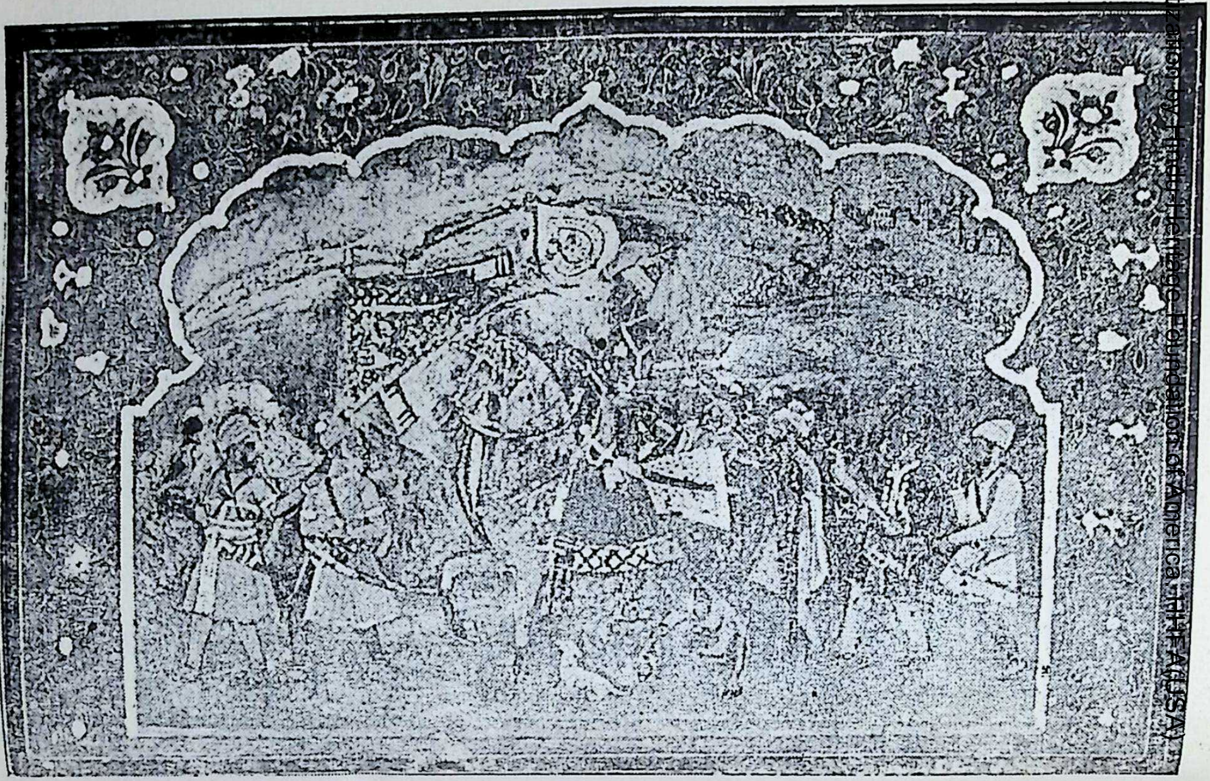
The obtrusive presence of the Khalsa at Anandpur obliged some of the Hill Chiefs to form a coalition against Guru Gobind Singh. Their combination, though suggested by self-interest, was dictated by the helplessness of each individual Chief against the solid defences of Anandpur. On consultation with one another, they sent an ultimatum to Guru Gobind Singh to leave the hills. Treating the conflict as inevitable, Guru Gobind Singh started preparing for defence; and this silent acceptance of the challenge brought the allied troops of the Chiefs once again towards Anandpur. They were welcomed by a cannon shot from the fort of Anandgarh. They decided to lay siege to the town instead of suffering heavy losses in an attempt to capture it by a direct assault. Guru Gobind Singh decided to send out sorties and the Khalsa horsemen inflicted considerable losses on the allied troops whose superior numbers were more than offset by the studied tactics of Guru Gobind Singh who commanded a fortified eminence and directed the operations to his best advantage. Consequently, the Hill Chiefs were left with the immediate alternative of retreat. But they resolved to return with a redoubled force. The long standing conflict between the proud Chief of Bilaspur and the determined Guru of the Khalsa was coming to its climax in the latter half of 1704.

The Hill Chiefs represented their plight to the Mughal Government once again, but with a greater earnestness and vehemence this time. Bhim Chand is believed to have represented to the Emperor himself their view-point in which the potential danger of the Khalsa to the peace of the Empire was underlined.[21] At any rate Aurangzib took a serious notice of the situation in the Punjab hills with an eye on the advantage of peace among his vassals who had given him no trouble in the past seven or eight years. Imperial orders were sent to the Governor of Lahore and to the *faujdar* of Sarhind, with specific instructions to aid the Hill Chiefs in their conflict with Guru Gobind Singh.[22] Wazir Khan, the experienced but officious *faujdar* of Sarhind, readily mobilized his troops and Mughal contingents from Lahore and other places were sent to join him. At the same time the Hill Chiefs mustered their troops and incited the Gujjars and Ranghars to action. Thus a formidable combination was formed against Guru Gobind Singh. An apparently petty and local conflict was transformed into a trial of strength between the nascent Khalsa under the leadership of Guru Singh at the height of his powers and the overgrown Mughal Empire under the aged Aurangzib.

The allied forces failed to take Anandpur by assault. Its fortified places had been well guarded by the Khalsa, but they did not wait for the enemy to reach the town itself. They came out to give battle to the invader and fought with their usual courage and tenacity. Both the sides suffered great losses; but the Khalsa succeeded in repulsing the first attack. Fighting continued for several days, but without bringing any success to the allies. They held a council of war in which the Mughal commanders suggested a siege to starve the Guru and the Khalsa to submission. While the Mughal com-

Guru Gobind Singh and the Khalsa Army

(*a fresco in the Golden Temple, Amritsar*)



courtesy : Dr. M. S. Randhawa

manders were eager to annihilate the Guru's power if they could, the Hill Chiefs simply wanted the hills to be cleared of the Khalsa menace.

The long siege that was now laid to Anandpur put the Khalsa on trial and obliged Guru Gobind Singh eventually to evacuate the fortresses and the town. The allies concentrated all their resources on a complete blockade of the place; all ingress or egress was stopped; and the Khalsa were placed in a desperate position. Food-grain was soon selling at one rupee a seer and even at that price it was not always available. There was the scarcity of water too; and the small parties of the Khalsa, going out to fetch water, had to fight their way out. For food also, they had to fall upon the enemy's supplies under the cover of darkness, and some of them could not return at all. The besiegers took greater precautions to obviate the Khalsa's raids on their food supplies. Some of the Sikhs on their own initiative made a desperate attack in search of food; they were surrounded by the enemy troops and all died fighting. Guru Gobind Singh was informed of this; he was sorry to know what had happened and instructed the Khalsa to stay within the fortifications and watch the besiegers more closely.[23]

The situation became more and more desperate as the food ran short; and there were complaints. Alive to the grimness of the situation but perhaps expecting some reinforcements from the Khalsa in the Punjab, Guru Gobind Singh insisted on holding out for a few days more. But some of those present with him were keen on evacuating the place, particularly because the besiegers had been quick to exploit their desperate situation by holding out promises of safety if the Khalsa and their Guru would leave Anandpur and settle down elsewhere.[24] The Mughal commanders in particular appear to have promised safe evacuation to Guru Gobind Singh in the name of the Emperor himself. Against his own wishes and better judgement, Guru Gobind Singh agreed to evacuate the town, throwing the responsibility on the Khalsa for whatever might happen to them afterwards. He left Anandpur on the 21st of December, 1704.

The evacuation of Anandpur resulted in a disaster. Guru Gobind Singh and the Khalsa had left the town without interference from the allies; and the Hill Chiefs do not appear to have been keen to pursue them. But Guru Gobind Singh was soon taken in the rear by the Mughal commanders. Wazir Khan appears to have guided their action. A desperate struggle ensued on the right bank of the stream called Sarsa. Guru Gobind Singh succeeded in crossing the stream with his two eldest sons and a small number of his followers. The younger sons, along with their grandmother, Mata Gujari, were separated from him; and so was his wife, Mata Sundari. She was safely escorted to Delhi by Bhai Mani Singh but Mata Gujari and her grandsons fell into the hands of the Mughal *faujdar* at Morinda who conveyed them to Sarhind. After a few days they were produced before Wazir Khan and were asked to accept Islam. On their refusal to comply with this order they were executed, after some hesitation, on the 27th December. Mata Gujari died on the same day.[25]

Already, the elder sons of Guru Gobind Singh had died fighting in the battle of Chamkaur. Having crossed the Sarsa, Guru Gobind Singh had moved towards the present village Kotla Nihang, a few miles away from Rupar. Uday Singh and his companions, who had been left behind to obstruct the pursuing enemy, had fought valliantly but only to be cut to pieces by the overwhelming Mughal troops. However, their sacrifice had enabled Guru Gobing Singh to march to Chamkaur and take shelter in the *haveli* of its *zamindar*. Wazir Khan had not taken long to surround Chamkaur with his troops. He had also ordered reinforcements and artillery from Sarhind, expecting the contest to be long.[26]

However, the battle of Chamkaur did not last for more than a single day. Wazir Khan did not try to take the *haveli* by an assault. The Mughal troops gradually besieged Chamkaur closely. Their number was disproportionately large and Guru Gobind Singh with the small number of his companions could not hope to succeed against the besiegers. But the Khalsa were determined to defend the place and their Guru. They went out in small parties to fight and to meet certain death. The two elder sons of Guru Gobind Singh were among those who died fighting in the field of battle with a determined courage. As the day ended, only a few followers were alive with Guru Gobind Singh.

As the night spread its dark veil over the plains around Chamkaur, Guru Gobind Singh left the *haveli* without 'a hair of his body being injured'.[27] In his safe escape, he saw the hand of God.[28]

The great siege of Anandpur had been a time of trial for the Khalsa and the battle of Chamkaur brought in its train a time of trial even for Guru Gobind Singh. To all appearances his opponents had emerged successful from the trial of their armed strength with the Guru and the Khalsa. But there was another dimension to the situation.

VIII

Insistence on Moral Justice.

The year 1704 had closed with the most critical time in Guru Gobind Singh's life. In the early days of 1705 he was wandering from place to place in the present districts of Ambala, Patiala and Ludhiana either alone or with only a few companions, while the *thanadars* of Sarhind were searching for him. The Sikh tradition records the timely help which he received from his old teacher of Persian, Pir Muhammad, and from the Afghans named Nabi Khan and Ghani Khan.[1] It also records the fear among some of the Sikhs to associate themselves with the fugitive Guru. At a place called Jatpura in the present district of Ludhiana he received the tragic news that his younger sons had been executed at Sarhind and his aged mother, Mata Gujari, had died of grief. Both as a person and as the Guru of the Sikhs, Gobind Singh was now passing through the most crucial phase of his life.

Guru Gobind Singh's response to the hopeless situation in which he found himself in 1705 was remarkable. His faith in God, now as before, remained unshaken. His poetic sensibility was, if any thing, heightened by his personal grief as much as by his unwavering and deep faith. This is evident from:[2]

> Go, tell the Beloved Lord
> The condition of His yearning devotee,
> Without Thee, rich coverings are an agony to us;
> And to live in the comforts of our households
> Is like living with snakes ! our pitchers
> Have become like pikes on which men are impaled,
> The cup we drink from has an edge like a dagger;
> O Beloved, Thy turning away from us,
> Is like the knife of the butcher.
> With the Beloved in heart, a mattress of straw would please us.
> Without Him in rich houses, we are burned alive.

One has to know the original Punjabi to feel the heightened poetic sensibility embodied in these lines which are essentially a statement of his firm faith in God.

As a corollary of that faith, Guru Gobind Singh continued to baptise the Sikhs through the *khande ki pahul.* His immediate need was to re-establish his contact with the Khalsa. They gradually started coming to him and moved with him from village to village in the district of the Brars. He was probably looking for a place where he could establish a new centre, albeit temporarily, for his missionary work which by now was certainly indistinct from the need for self-defence.

Wazir Khan, the *faujdar* of Sarhind, heard of the renewed activities of Guru Gobind Singh and mobilized his troops. He is believed to have been guided by Kapura, after whom was named the present town of Kot Kapura, to the relatively inaccessible region around the present Muktsar where he could encounter the Khalsa. He overtook the rear-guard of the Khalsa at a place called Khidrana and attacked them. The Khalsa fought with a determination born out of their renewed devotion to the Guru who had suffered so much at the hands of Wazir Khan.[3] They were overpowered by the overwhelming numbers of Wazir Khan's troops, but not before they had shown their mettle as the toughest fighters whom the experienced Mughal *faujdar* had ever known in his life. They have been immortalized in the name *Muktsar* (the pool of immortality) which was given to the place where they had died fighting to the last man.

Wazir Khan decided to return without striking a blow on the main body of the Khalsa with Guru Gobind Singh. Perhaps he thought it was inadvisable to risk a serious battle in a waterless tract away from his headquarters. His was the last campaign to be undertaken by a Mughal official against Guru Gobind Singh.

Already, Guru Gobind Singh had written a letter to Aurangzib. The contemporary biographer of the Guru has given a gist of that letter in which was underlined the perjury of the Mughal officials and the urgency of paying personal attention to the affairs of Guru Gobind Singh.[4] The letter which Guru Gobind Singh was believed to have written to the Mughal Emperor is now known as the *zafarnama*.[5] The name is highly significant of the moral import of this letter.

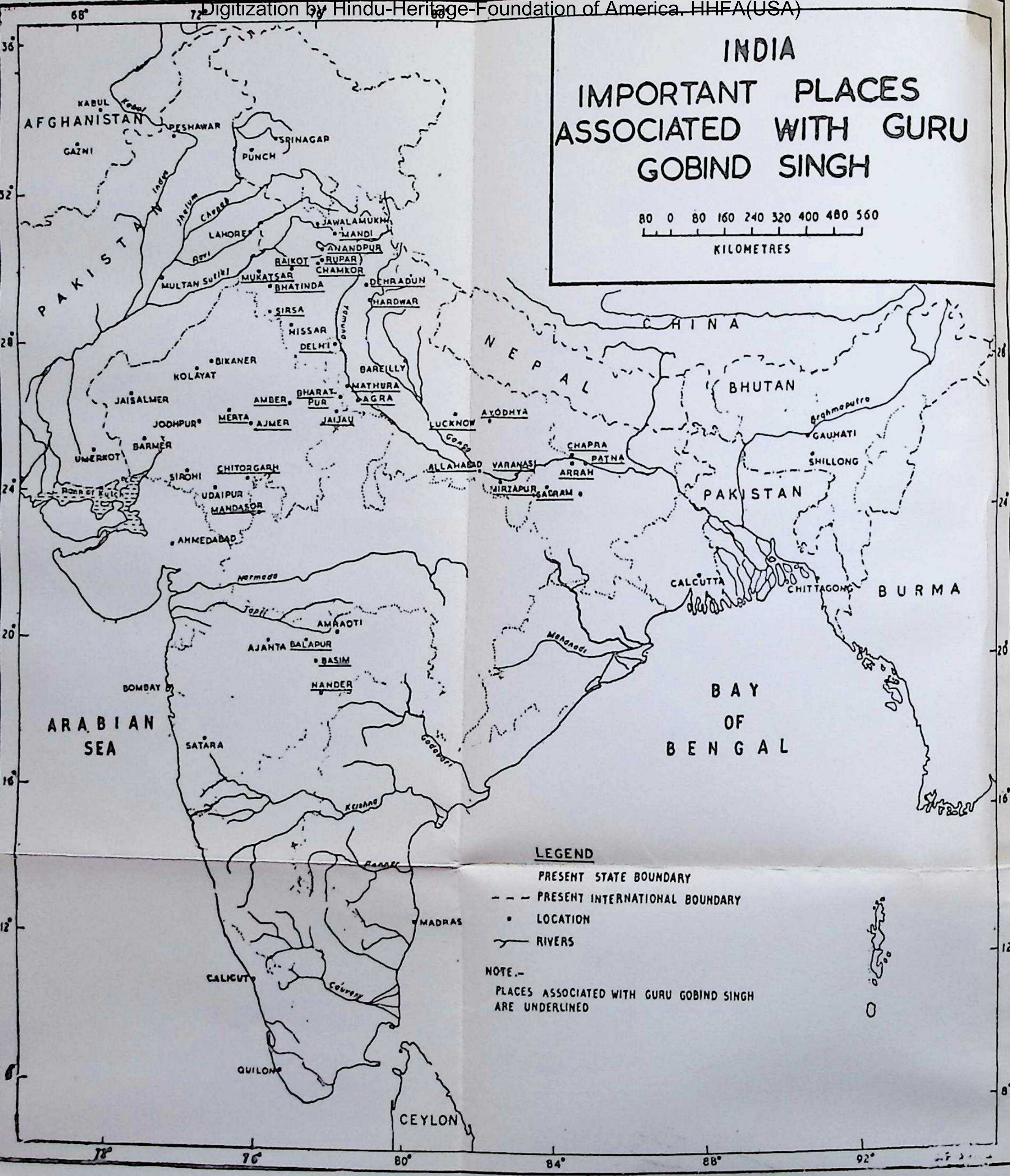
For some time after the battle of Khidrana Guru Gobind Singh travelled from place to place and then settled down at Talwandi Sabo, the present Damdama Sahib. The old Sikhs came to visit the new centre and the old threads were being gradually picked up. A new recension of the *Granth* was prepared at this place which is generally associated with some of the literary activity of Guru Gobind Singh. The baptism of the double-edged sword was administered to many a Sikh and the number of the *pahuldhari* Khalsa began to increase. The acceptance of *pahul* by the ancestors of the founders of Patiala and Nabha is traditionally placed during this phase of Guru Gobind Singh's life. From a constructive point of view, as Indubhushan Banerjee remarks, some solid achievements mark the

Guru's stay at Damdama for a little less than a year. It may be added that the Guru and his Khalsa had emerged successful from their trial, not in the superficial terms of military glory but in accordance with the essential nature of Guru Gobind Singh's mission, namely to defend the claims of conscience against external interference.

At Talwandi Sabo Guru Gobind Singh received the imperial messengers who had come to convey to him the Emperor's wish for a personal meeting. Guru Gobind Singh's letter to Aurangzib appears to have produced the desired effect. In the *Ahkam-i-Alamgiri* the receipt of a letter from Guru Gobind Singh is acknowledged by the Emperor and the orders which he issued to Munim Khan at Lahore 'to conciliate' Guru Gobind Singh, and also to make satisfactory arrangements for his travel towards the south, may also be seen in the *Ahkam-i-Alamgiri.*[6] That Aurangzib was anxious to meet Guru Gobind Singh is evident from the *ahkam*, though it is not clear why. Perhaps he wished to secure peace in the Punjab now that the war in Maharashtra was going from bad to worse.[7]

Before the end of 1706, Guru Gobind Singh had decided, against the suggestions of some of his followers, to leave Talwandi Sabo with a view to meeting Aurangzib in the south. Preparations for the journey had been made with the help of the Khalsa and many of them had been invited to accompany him.[8] His resolve to see the Mughal Emperor has been generally but wrongly interpreted in terms of an unqualified submission to the Mughal Government, largely because the purpose of his meeting with Aurangzib has never been satisfactorily known.

Guru Gobind Singh's purpose in seeing the Emperor was to impress upon him the justness of his own cause.[9] The *Zafarnama* gives us some idea of his expectations. As already noted, he had told the Emperor that his officials had perjured themselves (by attacking Guru Gobind Singh after the evacuation of Anandpur in 1704). Aurangzib was to be blamed also for the misuse of his power. Guru Gobind Singh's quarrel was with the Hill Chiefs and, in his own eyes, the real cause of his conflict with them was religious : while they were idol-worshippers, Guru Gobind Singh was, metaphorically, an 'idol-breaker'. But ironically, the Emperor who prided himself to be an 'idol-breaker' had sided with the idolatrous chiefs by ordering his officials to march to their aid. For this moral injustice the Emperor would be accountable to the One True Lord in the life hereafter. Inspite of his professions



INDIA IMPORTANT PLACES ASSOCIATED WITH GURU GOBIND SINGH

80 0 80 160 240 320 400 480 560
KILOMETRES
68°
72°
36°
32°
28°
24°
20°
16°
12°
8°
72°
76°
80°
84°
88°
92°
AFGHANISTAN
KABUL
Kabul
GAZNI
PESHAWAR
SRINAGAR
PUNCH
PAKISTAN
Indus
Jhelum
Chenab
Ravi
Sutlej
LAHORE
MULTAN
JAWALAMUKHI
MANDI
ANANDPUR
RUPAR
RAIKOT
CHAMKOR
MUKATSAR
BHATINDA
DEHRADUN
HARDWAR
SIRSA
HISSAR
DELHI
Yamuna
BIKANER
KOLAYAT
JAISALMER
BAREILLY
MATHURA
AGRA
BHARAT-PUR
AMBER
JAIJAU
JODHPUR
MERTA
AJMER
BARMER
UMERKOT
Rann of Kutch
SIROHI
CHITORGARH
UDAIPUR
MANDASOR
AHMEDABAD
CHINA
NEPAL
BHUTAN
Brahmaputra
GAUHATI
SHILLONG
LUCKNOW
AYODHYA
Ganga
ALLAHABAD
VARANASI
MIRZAPUR
SASRAM
CHAPRA
PATNA
ARRAH
PAKISTAN
CALCUTTA
CHITTAGONG
BURMA
Narmada
Tapti
AMRAOTI
AJANTA
BALAPUR
BASIM
NANDER
Mahanadi
BOMBAY
ARABIAN SEA
SATARA
Godavari
Krishna
BAY OF BENGAL
Pennar
MADRAS
CALICUT
Cauvery
QUILON
CEYLON

LEGEND

PRESENT STATE BOUNDARY
- - - PRESENT INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY
• LOCATION
RIVERS

NOTE.—
PLACES ASSOCIATED WITH GURU GOBIND SINGH ARE UNDERLINED

to the contrary, the Emperor's might was not consecrated to the service of God. Guru Gobind Singh was prepared, now as before, to defend himself if he was forced to do so. He was thus appealing to the Emperor's sense of moral justice without relinquishing his own inalienable right to defend the claims of conscience. We may venture to suggest, therefore, that Guru Gobind Singh expected the Emperor to restore the *status quo ante*, which implied the continuation of his mission at Anandpur. He wanted peace with Aurangzib, but on his own modest terms.

With these expectations, Guru Gobind Singh left Talwandi Sabo to meet Aurangzib in the Deccan. He was accompanied by a considerable number of the Khalsa who had volunteered to go to the south. The arrangements which Aurangzib had suggested for Guru Gobind Singh's travel to the Imperial Court do not appear to have been accepted by the Guru.[10] His party moved towards the present town of Sirsa and then southwards into Rajasthan. In Rajasthan the Khalsa were obliged sometimes to force the villagers on the way to make contributions in kind, but more often the offers of food supplies came voluntarily.[11] Guru Gobind Singh continued to hold his daily congregations in which he preached his mission. Near Baghaur in Rajasthan, he heard the news of Aurangzib's death. Soon afterwards he decided to return, and the places associated with his visit to them indicate that he was now moving towards Delhi.

Meanwhile, Muhammad Muazzam, who too had heard of the Emperor's death, left Jamrud in the last week of March, 1707, and reached Peshawar on the last day of the month. His trusted governor at Lahore, Munim Khan, had kept the troops in readiness for the long awaited war of succession and welcomed Muazzam who was formally declared Emperor before he entered Lahore. Collecting men and money from the officials of the Mughal Government in that part of the Empire, he reached Delhi in the beginning of June. Wazir Khan, the *faujdar* of Sarhind, had contributed eight lakhs. Muhammad Muazzam left Delhi in the first week of June, took possession of the treasures at Agra, and moved towards Dholpur to oppose Azam Shah, his rival claimant to the Mughal throne. Guru Gobind Singh who had been heading towards Delhi, met Muhammad Muazzam probably also before but certainly after the battle of Jaju.[12]

Guru Gobind Singh's keenness to meet Bahadur Shah is understandable. Aurangzib's death had left his purpose unsolved and, after the issue of war had been decided, he could meet Bahadur Shah for the same purpose for which he had set out to meet Aurangzib in the south.

At Agra, Guru Gobind Singh was given an honourable reception by Bahadur Shah: he was allowed to go fully armed into the Emperor's presence and was given a costly present along with a *khilat*, as is evident from an entry in the *Akhbarat-i-Darbar-i-Mualla* (Jaipur), dated 24th July, 1707.[13]

Guru Gobind Singh's appreciation of what passed between himself and the Emperor was soon conveyed to the Khalsa in the Punjab. This letter is most significant for its allusion to the purpose of Guru Gobind Singh's meeting with Bahadur Shah. After mentioning the jewelled scarf and the *khilat* presented to him by the Emperor, Guru Gobind Singh expresses his satisfaction with 'other matters'. He then informs the Khalsa that he would return to them after a few days. Furthermore, he asks the Khalsa to remain in friendly association with one another and to come fully armed to the Guru's presence on his return to Kahlur[14]. There is hardly any doubt left about Guru Gobind Singh's objective; now as before, it was Anandpur.[15]

However, Guru Gobind Singh's hope of an early return to Anandpur, where he could pick up the old threads and continue with his mission, proved to be wishful thinking. His presence with or near the Imperial Court suited Bahadur Shah's purposes. Bahadur Shah had gained an experience of the north western parts of the Empire for over ten years and he was aware of the political situation in the Punjab. If the Hill Chiefs could be a source of trouble to the local *faujdars*, the popularity of Guru Gobind Singh with his Sikhs scattered nearly all over the Punjab made him equally important from a political point of view. At one time, Bahadur Shah had been ordered by Aurangzib to expel all the Sikhs from his territories;[16] at another, thousands of Sikhs on their way to the Barakzais had to be killed;[17] but Aurangzib had eventually decided to conciliate Guru Gobind Singh and Bahadur Shah, more than any one else, was aware of it.[18] With the issue of succession to the Mughal throne not yet finally settled, it was in the new Emperor's interest to secure peace and order in the north west. He could not afford to offend either the Hill Chiefs or Guru Gobind Singh. He was sagacious enough to realize that Guru Gobind Singh's awkward presence near the Court was preferable to his dangerous freedom in the Punjab. His diplomatic gestures of goodwill and kindness towards the Guru were all the more impressive for their political, albeit negative, advantage to the new Emperor.

For a few months, Guru Gobind Singh resided in a garden near Agra and occasionally went to see the Emperor who was still hard pressed with important affairs of the State. In November, 1707, Bahadur Shah started on his campaign in Rajasthan and Guru Gobind Singh accompanied the imperial army and remained near the camp for ten months more. His continued presence with or near the camp could easily be interpreted by distant or superficial observers as his acceptance of service with Bahadur Shah, particularly because Guru Gobind Singh and his Khalsa used to wear arms wherever they went. On several occasions, Guru Gobind Singh left the camp to spend his time elsewhere in his own way; and he continued preaching to all kinds of people.[19] Little knowing that Bahadur Shah would be obliged to go from Rajputana to the Deccan to fight Kam Bakhsh, Guru Gobind Singh remained near the Emperor without participating in any of the campaigns. He was probably encouraged to be hopeful that the Emperor would soon be free to pay his attention to the affairs of Guru Gobind Singh. When Bahadur Shah moved towards Hyderabad, Guru Gobind Singh also moved with him.

Towards the end of September, 1708, the imperial army halted near Nander, a place of pilgrimage on the river Godavari and about a hundred and fifty miles to the north west of Hyderabad. Guru Gobind

Singh selected for his residence a congenial spot overlooking the river; and he started addressing congregations, besides offering the usual daily prayers. Guru Gobind Singh's missionary activity among the inhabitants of Nander led to an armed fight between the Khalsa and the followers of a *bairagi*, later to be known as Banda.[20] The followers of Banda were worsted in the encounter, and his own encounter with Guru Gobind Singh resulted in Banda's conversion to Sikhism. He accepted the *pahul* and the *rehat* of the Khalsa.

All kinds of people started coming to the congregations of the Khalsa at Nander. Soon an Afghan named Jamshid Khan[21] started coming to the assemblies which were addressed by Guru Gobind Singh. Apparently he came to attend the congregation but was in fact looking for an opportunity to assassinate the Guru.[22] On the third or the fourth day of his visit he found the chance he was looking for: as Guru Gobind Singh retired to his personal apartments after the evening prayer, Jamshid Khan attacked him with a dagger. Though he succeeded in giving a severe wound to Guru Gobind Singh, the attempt cost him his own life.

The Emperor was informed of this unfortunate happening and he sent one of the royal surgeons to dress Guru Gobind Singh's wound. It healed in a few days, at least outwardly.[24] The imperial army left the environs of Nander to march towards Hyderabad.

Guru Gobind Singh resumed his task of addressing the assemblies. There were rejoicings among the Khalsa at Nander that God had saved their beloved Guru. In a *sawayya* composed by Guru Gobind Singh, his gratitude to God for protecting his life is aptly expressed.[25] Not even the innumerable weapons of all the enemies can inflict a fatal wound on those who seek refuge in God.

Not many days had passed, however, before Guru Gobind Singh announced to his followers that his end was near. Perhaps the wound though closed had not actually healed.[26] The Khalsa were dismayed. Who would guide them in the future? They were told that they would henceforth be entrusted to God Himself. The True Guru will aid all those who would take inspiration from the *sabad-bani* of the Gurus and follow the *rehat* of the Khalsa.[27]

The personal Guruship of the Sikh *panth* had come to an end with the ninth successor of Guru Nanak and the Khalsa were left to trust God and to trust themselves. All the sons of Guru Gubind Singh were already dead and there was none else to 'bear the burden' of that grave office. A lesser man could not be acceptable to the Khalsa who had known Gobind Singh as their Guru. As a logical culmination of his mission, they were directly linked with their Creator for Whom they could live and move and have their being. The 'eternal-*bani*' would always be there to guide their footsteps to Him.

On the 18th October, 1708, Guru Gobind Singh resigned his life at the age of forty-two. His body was washed and dressed in his best with his jewels and arms and aigrette, and was cremated at Nander.[28]

Bahadur Shah sent a *khilat-i-matami* to the (adopted) son of Guru Gobind Rao *Nanak-panthi* in condolence of his father's death. It was brought to the Emperor's notice that the deceased had left a large property behind. The Emperor was pleased to order that this property was not to go to the royal coffers; it must be left untouched. It was the property of a *darvesh*.[30]

For the majority of his contemporaries Guru Gobind Singh died an obscure death. To those who have tried to look upon his life as simply a long round of unsuccessful political struggle and personal misfortune, he died a defeated man. Nothing could be more mistaken. Gobind had achieved one victory; he had made himself master of the imagination of his followers.[31] If in his life-time the Sikh was identified with the Khalsa, soon after his death the Khalsa was identified with the Singh. And the Singhs have belonged to the central stream of Sikh history ever since the death of Guru Gobind Singh.

IX

The Legacy

Guru Gobind Singh's chief legacy was the 'Sikh struggle for Independence' in the land where his predecessors had lived and preached, and where he had spent the major part of his life. His Khalsa first fought against the Mughals and then against the Afghans and did not take rest till it had achieved the goal after a long and determined struggle of almost a century.

To understand Guru Gobind Singh's legacy in its proper perspective, it is necessary to remember that at the beginning of his pontificate, the Sikh *panth* was in potential conflict with two major social and political forces of the time. The Mughals had for some time past looked upon the Sikhs with suspicion because they had been transformed by the earlier Gurus into an articulate socio-religious entity which appeared to the Mughals to be a potential threat to the peace of their Empire in the province which guarded that Empire's most vulnerable frontier. The Government at Delhi had, therefore, begun an active interference with the *panth*, of course, in the mistaken belief that thereby it would curb the potential danger before it went out of control. That actually made the Sikh conflict with the Mughals inevitable.

In the beginning the nascent Sikh *panth* was keen to avoid the conflict with the Mughal Government which had an elaborate political and administrative net-work spread over the sub-continent. It shifted its head quarters to the Punjab hills. This was half a century before the birth of Guru Gobind Singh. The Rajas in the Punjab hills formed the apex of a highly conservative socio-political system which had been sanctified by the tradition of several centuries. They discovered that the relatively egalitarian and 'iconoclastic' Sikh *panth* stood in sharp contrast to their system but not before it had already entrenched its headquarters in their midst. In the pride of their past when the Hill Chiefs tried to overawe and drive away the Sikhs from the hills during the pontificate of Guru Gobind Singh, they acted as a catalytic agent in transforming the potential conflict between the Sikh *panth* and the Mughals into an actual one.

The importance of the measures adopted by Guru Gobind Singh in this context can hardly be over-emphasised. He sharpened, if anything, the distinctive identity of the Sikhs and enabled them eventually to meet the challenge from the Mughal

Government. By his own resistance against the Hill Rajas and the Mughals, he supplied the Sikhs with an example that served as a source of their inspiration, and as the motive force of their political activity. It is to be noticed in the difference between the Sikh reaction after Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom and his own death soon after his failure to obtain justice from the Mughal Emperor. On the former occasion the active Sikh resentment was extremely feeble but when Guru Gobind Singh died, a large majority of his followers rose up in arms against the Mughal State.

Inspite of the fact that Guru Gobind Singh's primary concern was with his religion, and his theology did not differ in essentials from that of the founders of Sikhism, his consolidation of the Sikh movement in many important ways enabled it to begin after his death a war against the Government that had denied him moral justice. Gobind's imparting a solidity to his *panth* also enabled it to convert that war into a full fledged 'Sikh struggle for Independence' in the land where he had fought with a tenacity which earned him a place among the greatest men of Indian history.

After the death of Guru Gobind Singh, the Sikhs refused to recognize any authority, be it Mughal or Afghan, which they believed would deny them justice. On the other hand, under the belief that the only guarantee for their getting that justice was the establishment of Khalsa sovereignty they fought for it with the fervour born out of their faith in their collective self which Gobind gave them and succeeded against such formidable opponents as the Mughals and the Afghans. They registered their indebtedness to the great Guru after every victory by declaring that it was Gobind's and of no one else. This acknowledgement and the great triumphs of the Khalsa between 1708 and 1801 are a measure of Guru Gobind Singh's greatness.

The story of Khalsa glory began soon after their Guru had passed away at Nander. Their dazzling success in the first year of its struggle appears almost incredible. With the *hukamnamas* of Gobind, when Banda came to the Punjab in 1709, the enthusiastic followers of Gobind joined him in large numbers.[1] This made him almost irresistible. He attacked Samana and Sadhaura and beat with surprising ease the forces of the Sarhind governor in the battles of Rupar and Chappar Chiri. This was followed by the sack of Sarhind and the whole of the *faujdari* of Wazir Khan falling soon after. Banda and the Sikhs hastened to establish a state of the outlaws of yesterday and on the seals of the new Government thankfully proclaimed it to be Gobind's victory. The inscription on the seal of the new Government ran as follows :

Deg o Tegh o Fateh Nusrat-i-bedirang
Yaft az Nanak Guru Gobind Singh[2].

Banda and his men were soon beaten but even as he was pursued by the whole might of the Mughals, he did not forget to 'undertake the military expedition against the Hindu Chiefs of the Shivaliks' and to force many of them 'to come into the Sikh Camp to greet the conqueror, to offer their allegiance and to pay *nazarana* and tribute into the Sikh treasury'[3].

The structure of the state established by Banda was crushed by the Mughals, but not the spirit of Gobind that inspired it. That enabled the Sikhs to survive the ordeals that they had to undergo at the hands of the Mughals.[4] The latter came rather heavily on the bearded Sikhs and they had to pass through the baptism of fire which continued long after the execution of Banda.

Between 1716 and 1745, the Mughal Governors of Lahore, the powerful Shah Nawaz and Zakariya Khan continued to persecute the followers of Gobind but only to provide the Khalsa with the proverbial blood of the martyrs that nourished the *panth*. It certainly helped the far sighted Sikh leaders obliterate old schisms and prevent new dissensions, in peaceful gatherings in the holy city of Amritsar.[5] The result was that within three decades of Gobind's death his Sikhs became such a dynamic force as to attract the notice of even the formidable Nadir Shah. The Persian Conqueror would not know that in the precincts of the temple once closed to Tegh Bahadur, Gobind's playmate and disciple Bhai Mani Singh had already compiled the writings of the man whose spirit inspired the Sikhs.[6] If he had known it, he would not have asked the trembling Zakariya as to who were the bearded Sikhs daring to harm him as if the wrath of the man who had sacked Delhi was of no consequence to them.[7]

The innate strength of Gobind's followers noticed by one who had reduced the prestige of Babur's descendants to its lowest ebb, enabled them to take advantage of the confusion in the Mughal administration of the Punjab between 1st July 1745 and 3rd January 1746.[8] When the sons of Zakariya quarrelled for the governorship of the Punjab, the Khalsa of Gobind, met, passed a *gurumatta*[9] and divided itself into 25 groups of 100 soldiers each. In doing that, the followers of Gobind created two institutions of vital importance, *gurumatta* and *Dal.*[10] They set the pattern of the later development of the Sikh movement besides teaching the Khalsa to combine the benefits of centralised counsel with those of dividing itself for the purpose of better organisation. The octogenarian Sundari, must have found in these developments ample compensations for the disappointments in her adopted son and grandson.[11]

The test of the added vitality resulting from the new institutions, one of them significantly named to remind the Sikhs of the Guru, came sooner than expected. In 1848 when Ahmad Shah Abdali invaded India for the first time, he won a victory over the Mughal Governor (Shah Nawaz) at Lahore but getting more ambitious extended himself too far. He suffered a defeat at Manupur at the hands of Muin-ul-Mulk, the lucky son of the Delhi *wazir* who had laid the foundation of the son's victory by his death. The Sikh *Dal* had watched the conflict closely and even as the victor of Manupur, dazed by his chance victory, took five days to venture out of the victorious battlefield, the Sikh bands fell on the retreating Afghans. Emboldened by their latest feat. they hastened to the holy city of Amritsar and created the *Dal Khalsa* by uniting 'the whole body of the fighting Sikhs in the form of a standing national army'[12] owing allegiance not to this leader or that but to the entire brotherhood, Gobind's Khalsa.

That synchronised with the appointment of Mannu, as Muin-ul-Mulk was known, to the Governorship of the Punjab. The new Governor apprehending another attack by Abdali sought to unite his administration to the anti-Afghan Khalsa by granting it 'one-fourth of the revenue of the pergunnah of patti.'[13] That did not prevent Ahmad coming again and demanding the revenue of the frontier Mahals which to the unpleasant surprise of the Khalsa, Mannu, granted to the Afghans with abject haste.[14] Mannu lost the Khalsa support immediately and could later pacify it with difficulty even when he granted them 'a Jagir worth about a lakh and a quarter of rupees'[15]. Mannu's anti-Afghan pose was dependent on the factional politics at Delhi and with that changed he had no scruples during the third invasion of Abdali, in changing allegiance from Delhi to Kabul.[16] The *volte-face* of the Mughal Governor of the Punjab thus lost the 'land of the five rivers' to the Mughals and it became a part of the Afghan Empire. The Khalsa in its love of the land where Gobind and his predecessors had once moved and preached and where by now it aimed at creating a state of its own could not have liked Mannu's turn about. Now Mannu, the Sikhs felt, would not but aim at the complete annihilation of Gobind's image. The apprehension of the Sikhs came all too true. The efficiency of Mir Mannu combined with Ahmad's contempt for the Sikhs to give a free rein to persecuting the Khalsa. That continued till 3rd November 1753 when Mannu died.[17] The period between 1748 and 1753 tested the foresight and efficiency of Gobind's Khalsa and the institution that it had forged in the process of its struggle till then. The *gurumatta* and the *Dal* were found conscious of their obligations and prepared for the role ahead of them. The shape of things to come gave a glimpse in this period at the time of Mannu's transfer of allegiance to Abdali. The *Dal Khalsa* attacked Lahore and the leader took his seat 'on the platform of Kotwali' and demanded the revenues of the city of Lahore.[18]

With *gurumatta* and *Dal Khalsa* strong and active, the Sikhs could easily take advantage of the next favourable opportunity that came their way. That was during the three years that followed Mannu's death. In that short period there were nine swift changes in the Governorship of the Punjab[19] with disastrous results for the people. Between the debaucheries of Mannu's widow, Mughlani Begum and the machinations of clever Adina Beg, the land of the five rivers became a prize for which the hereditary claim of the political authority at Delhi contended with the military genius at Kabul. There was in these years literally a complete collapse of the state political apparatus. The most pressing need of the people of the Punjab, under the circumstances, was for an institution which would protect them from internal chaos. The Khalsa rose to the occasion and devised the institution understandably called the *Rakhi* system.[20] With the zeal of enthusiasts born out of the hallowed memories of Gobind, the units of the Khalsa *Dal* moved about offering the *Rakhi* plan to each village individually. So well was the new institution tuned to the needs of the times that within the remarkably short period of three years, four out of the five *doabs* fell under the *khalsa* umbrella. When every *Hari* and *Sauni*, the representatives of the *khalsa Dal* came to demand 1/5th of produce of the village due to the protector, Gobind's Sikhs received the welcome reserved for the deliverer and not the frowns meant for the tax collector.[21] The extent of the territory that the Khalsa had to protect thus was so large that it felt it necessary to divide itself into units or divisions called the *Misls*. It must be remembered, however, that these *Misls* continued to remain part of the national army called *Dal Khalsa* and remained bound to the common decisions taken through the *gurumatta* in the name of Gobind and his predecessors.

Organisationally Gobind's Khalsa was by now fit to make a bid to the political sovereignty of the Punjab but Gobind's example and its own post-Gobind history had taught it to time its moves shrewdly. It looked at the titanic conflict between the Afghans and the Marathas, which took a year and a quarter between 1759 and 1761 to reach its climax in the famous battle of Panipat, as a welcome interlude. The Khalsa utilized the time to popularise its *Rakhi* system to break the Afghan administration that the victor of Panipat sought to impose on the Punjab after the battle of Panipat.[22]

In the entire history of the Sikh struggle for political power, nothing high lights the Sikh's grateful remembrance of Gobind as the fountain source of what inspired them than what happened immediately after Lahore fell to the *Dal* in 1761. In the flush of enthusiasm on their occupying the political capital of the Punjab, some of the admirers of the Dal leader, Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, seized the 'royal mint' and struck the coin which bore the following inscription :

Sikka zad dar jahan bafazl-i-Akal,
Mulk-i-Ahmad grift Jassa Kalal.[23]

That was in the heat of the moment and was, perhaps, without the knowledge of Jassa Singh himself. When the Sikhs came to know of it, they "stopped the circulation of coin" immediately and struck another that bore the inscription that was orginally there on the seal of Banda :[24]

Deg O Tegh O Fateh O Nusrat-i-bedirang
Yaft az Nanak Guru Gobind Singh

That was an unequivocal declaration of the complete identification of the Khalsa with Gobind. It was also the Sikh's acknowledgement, in one of the great moments of their triumph, of their indebtedness to Gobind who half a century earlier lay wounded, waiting for his last hour, more than two thousand miles away from Lahore to all but his select devotees a forlorn and a defeated man. The inspiring faith of the Sikhs in the Khalsa as Gobind himself enabled them to withstand the next onslaughts of Ahmad Shah who in the prime of his power would not take the Sikh challenge lying down.

Ahmad now planned to crush the Khalsa with all the resources at his command and rushed to the Punjab. After one of the forced marches for which he was famous, he fell on Gobind's Sikhs at Kup and in attempting to break the Khalsa faith in itself, he indulged in a carnage that has earned for it the name of *Wadda Ghallughara*.[25] The stakes were big and in their consciousness of their goal, the Sikhs refused to be disheartened by it. Under Jassa Singh Ahluwalia, they were on the heels of Ahmad as the latter moved back to Lahore. The Khalsa made the Afghan hero suffer the humiliation of a life time when it not only resisted his attempt to break it but so turn the tables on him that on his way through Amritsar he had to make 'good his escape to Lahore under the cover of darkness'.[26] Ahmad's campaign in the Lakhi jungle also failed with the result that the Khalsa could replant its military posts at Lahore.[27] We are sure that on his way back to Afghanistan after this first post-Panipat campaign, he wondered how the infidel Gobind could have ever inspired a people to match the might of his irresitable arms.

What the Khalsa did on Ahmad's departure from the Punjab in 1763 can be likened to a rushing stream which had broken all bunds, gushing around all over the Punjab. By now divided into Misls—miliary battalions and not territorial overlords—the Khalsa grouped them in two *Dals*, Budha and Tarauna.[28] The former composed of Ahluwalia, Singhpuria. Dalewalia, Shahid, Karorsinghia, Nishanwalia and Phulkian, overran Jullundur *doab*, sacked Sarhind and conquered the entire *chakla* which was once governed by the persecutor of Gobind and his Sikhs. It was a vast tract of plain country extending from the Sirmur Hills and the Jumna in the east to Bahawalpur in the west, and from river Sutlej in the north to Hariana and Rohtak in the south, worth about sixty lakhs of rupees. In 1764, the embodiment of Gobind, the Khalsa must have appeared so formidable to the descendants of Medni Parkash at Nahan and Fateh Shah at Garhwal that if they had anything disparaging to say about the one time fugitive at Paonta, they dare not express themselves too explicitly.

Soon after the Budha Dal had overrun the Cis-Sutlej Punjab, the Tarauna Dal consisting of Bhangis, Nakkais, Ramgarhiyas, Shukarchakyas and Kanhiyas, silently prepared for a similar conquest in the Trans-Sutlej area. In 1763 and 1764, apprehensive of Ahmad swooping on the Punjab anytime, it kept quiet. But the suddenness with which in March 1764 Abdali went back from Lahore where he had come on his seventh invasion of Hindustan,[29] the Taruuna Dal felt encouraged. It divided itself into two under Charat Singh Shukarchakiya and Hari Singh Bhangi. The group under Shukarchakiya moved north, trod over Rechna *doab* and laid seige to Rohtas. It even succeeded in capturing the Afghan governor of Kashmir when the latter tried to help the governor at Rohtas. It siezed Salt Ranges and built many forts over the 'solid block of territory extending between the Indus and the Jhelum from the foot of the hills to the sourthern outskirts of Salt ranges'.[30] The unit under Hari Singh, during this time, moved south west of Lahore. It captured Nakka, and went to Multan. It even laid waste the Derajat.[31]

That brought Ahmed on his last serious invasion of Hindustan. He now came to try a new policy of placating at the expense of Khalsa solidarity some chiefs by investing them with some sort of regal authority in case they recognized his suzerainty. His eyes were particularly on Alha Singh. Following a circuitous route, therefore, Ahmad reached Sarhind and successfully tempted Alha Singh to a title and 'a Khillat, kettledrum, and banner' and 'the independent chieftainship of Sirhind for an annual subsidy of three and a half lakhs of rupees.'[32] The one time *subedari* of Wazir Khan, even as an 'independent chieftainship' seemed too mean a temptation to be accepted by one of the Sikh *sardars* and made the *Dal Khalsa* so angry that Ahmad could not get the opportunity of trying the new policy in the Trans-Sutlej area. The Afghan 'conqueror' was literally hounded out from the doabs lying to the north of the river Sutlej and was lucky to escape disaster.[33] A fact which would bring out pointedly the depths to which Gobind's Khalsa brought down Ahmad's reputation on his march through Trans-Sutlej Punjab may be noted. When he was about to take leave of Nasir Khan, his faithful companion in this invasion, he offered the latter the 'whole country westward of Chenab'. But the 'Khan in complete agreement with his counsellors respectfully declined the gift'.[34] Nasir Khan was obviously so afraid of the Khasla that he did not want to involve himself in anything that might bring him into conflict with the people who had lately harassed Abdali so effectively. The Khan proved to be a far sighted individual because no sooner Ahmed left Hindustan, the Punjab 'from Sirhind to Lahore, Multan, and even Derajat' acknowledged the sovereignty of the Khalsa.[35] The triumphant Sikhs proclaimed the complete equation of the Khalsa and the Guru by gratefully acknowledging their latest feat to be Gobind's achievement. On the coins that they issued was engraved :

Degh o Tegh o Fateh o Nusrat–i–bedirang
Yaft az Nanak Guru Gobind Singh.

The Sikhs continued striking this coin[36] as they entrenched themselves as the political sovereigns over the land where *masands* once troubled Gobind's father and where petty *subedars* of Aurangzib's Empire persecuted him. They did that also on the day Ranjit got himself coronated as a Maharaja to establish, as he then declared, the rule of *Panth Khalsaji* over the whole of the Punjab.[37]

APPENDIX A

Contemporary Hill Chiefs

KANGRA

Vijay Ram Chand	1660–1687
Udai Ram Chand	1687–1690
Bhim Chand	1690–1697
(Kripal Chand, who is frequently mentioned in the *Bachittar Natak*, was his brother)	
Alam Chand	1697–1700
Hamir Chand	1700–1747

KAHLUR (Bilaspur)

Dip Chand	1650–1667
Bhim Chand	1667–1712
Ajmer Chand	1712–1741

HINDUR (Nalagarh)

Sansar Chand	? –1618
Dharam Chand	1618–1701
Himmat Chand	1701–1704
Bhup Chand	1704– ?

SIRMUR (Nahan)

Karam Chand	1616–1630
Mandhata Farkash	1630–1654

Subhag Parkash	1654–1664
Budh Parkash	1664–1684
Mat Parkash	1684–1704
Hari Parkash	1704–1712

MANDI

Shyam Sen	1664–1679
Gaur Sen	1679–1684
Sidh Sen	1684–1727

NURPUR

Raj Rup Singh	1646–1661
Mandhata	1661–1700
Dayadhata	1700–1735

JAMMU

Bhupat Dev	1625–1650
Hari Dev	1650–1675
Gajai Dev	1675–1703
Dhrub Dev	1703–1717

GARHWAL (Srinagar)

Pirthi Shah	?–1662
Medni Shah	1662–1684
Fateh Shah	1684–1717

GULER

Rup Chand	1610–1635
Man Singh	1635–1661
Bikram Singh	1661–1675
Raj Singh	1675–1695
(Gopal of the *Bachittar Natak*)	
Dalip Singh	1695–1730

JASWAN

Anirudh Chand	1588–1589

He was succeeded by Samir Chand, Man Singh, Ajaib Singh, Ram Singh, Ajit Singh and Jaghar Singh. Of these, RAM SINGH was certainly a contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh.

KULU

Jagat Singh	1637–1672
Bidhi Singh	1672–1688
Man Singh	1688–1719

APPENDIX B

Bhim Chand's Demand of a Tribute from Guru Gobind Singh

Bhim Chand's keenness to exact tribute from Guru Gobind Singh can best be understood by keeping in view the association of the Sikh Gurus with the Shiwalik hills which had begun in 1618 during the pontificate of Guru Hargobind. His relations with the Mughal Emperor Jahangir were cordial and the Mughal Empire was then at the height of its glory.

It is difficult to be absolutely certain of why Hargobind came to Hindur in 1618 to defeat its Chief, Sansar Chand, in a military engagement. Dharam Chand (called Tara Chand by Khazan Singh and Rose), who was one of the eight sons of the ruler of Hindur, seems to have sought Guru Hargobind's aid against his own father who had in all probability nominated some other son as his successor. Dharam Chand might have met the Guru first in the fort of Gwalior where they were in confinement about a decade earlier and where they might have become friendly enough to share each other's hopes and aspirations. It appears, further, that on Sansar Chand's death soon after his defeat there began a regular contest for the Hindur *gaddi* in which Dharam Chand was helped by Guru Hargobind against the rival claimants. The Guru returned to his headquarters at Amritsar after Dharam Chand had ascended to the *gaddi* of Hindur in 1618.

Seven years later, when Jahangir died in 1625, Guru Hargobind sent his eldest son, Gurditta, to Hindur to establish a Sikh centre in the territory of Dharam Chand. Perhaps Hargobind did not expect to receive from Shah Jahan the same consideration as he had been receiving from Jahangir; and the new centre outside the administrative jurisdiction of the Mughal officials could be useful in several ways. Gurditta was well received in Hindur and he was helped to establish a centre at the present site of Kiratpur which then lay close to the border of Kahlur.

In the early 1630's, Guru Hargobind fell out with the Mughal officials in the Punjab and, having fought four minor but successful battles, shifted his headquarters to the already flourishing centre at Kiratpur. His presence there transformed the place into an armed camp.

Dharam Chand found the Sikh Gurus and their armed contingents very useful in his fight with the neighbouring Chiefs. He defeated 'the *nawab*' of Rupar in 1642 with Guru Hargobind's help. Though the successors of Guru Hargobind, particularly Har Krishan, gave up some of the martial practices of

Hargobind, their Sikhs could nevertheless be useful as soldiers. In 1556, Dharam Chand employed the Sikhs in his war with the Chief of Kahlur. It was natural for the neighbouring Chiefs to look for an opportunity to detach the Sikh Gurus and the Sikhs from their close friendship with the Chief of Hindur.

Guru Tegh Bahadur's arrival at Kiratpur in 1665 supplied that opportunity. On hearing that Tegh Bahadur was being troubled by the supporters of Dhir Mal at Kiratpur, Dip Chand of Kahlur invited the Sikh Guru to settle down at Makhowal which was within the territories of Dip Chand but not far from Kiratpur itself. Guru Tegh Bahadur stayed at Makhowal for a short time before moving out to 'the east'. In 1671, when he returned to the Punjab, he was recognized as the undisputed Guru by the majority of the Sikhs, including those at Kiratpur. Now he had two headquarters : one at Makhowal in Kahlur and the other at Kiratpur in Hindur.

For nearly a decade, the existence of the Guru's headquarters in two principalities did not create any complication for various reasons. Bhim Chand, who had succeeded to the Kahlur *gaddi* after Dip Chand's death in 1667, was a minor and he could not assert himself in any way. Also, there was a general stir in the hills against the Mughals in the first half of the 1670's, which overshadowed the mutual differences of the Chiefs of Kahlur and Hindur. Both of them remained indulgent towards the Sikhs, particularly after the martyrdom of Guru Teg Bahadur at Delhi in 1675.

Within a few years, however, Kripal adopted the martial interests of Guru Hargobind and Makhowal was beginning to give the appearance of an armed camp. His movements between Makowal and Kiratpur, which hitherto had appeared to be an ordinary thing, were looked upon with suspicion by Bhim Chand who was now coming to manhoood. Now that the anti-Mughal sentiment no longer bound the Hill Chiefs, their mutual rivalries and differences reappeared; and Bhim Chand did not like the association of the Sikhs with the rival principality of Dharam Chand.

Apprehensive of the close ties between the Chief of Hindur and the armed Sikhs of the young Guru Gobind under the guardianship of Kripal, Bhim Chand demanded an unequivocal declaration from Kripal and the Sikhs of Makhowal that their Guru recognized the temporal lordship of the Chief of Kahlur and of him alone. Hence Bhim Chand insisted on exacting tribute from Guru Gobind Singh.

For the factual basis of this note, we have drawn upon Rose's *Glossary of Tribes and Castes of the Punjab*, III, 688; Khazan Singh's *History and Philosophy of the Sikh Religion*, I, 113, 133, 136, 139, 143; and Hutchison and Vogel's *Punjab Hill States*, II, 502.

APPENDIX C

The chief difficulty of the student of the Khalsa of Guru Gobind Singh arises from the paucity of contemporary or near contemporary evidence. There are no doubt his own valuable compositions in verse and his *hukmnamas* in prose, some very useful news-items and *farmans*, an almost contemporary account of his life and mission, and many near contemporary references to some of the events of his life; but only a very small proportion of this evidence relates directly or indirectly to the Order of the Khalsa. It may be pointed out that even this small evidence has not been used by all the modern historians of Guru Gobind Singh. They have generally, and largely, depended upon later evidence—and that brings us to our second major difficulty.

Abundant material, both in Persian and Punjabi, on the life and mission of Guru Gobind Singh came into existence in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century; but to interpret this later evidence is not an easy task. Most of the modern historians of Guru Gobind Singh have adopted the very simple method of selecting one and rejecting another detail from one or more of the chronicles. But once that selection is made the isolated point or passage is treated as literally true. It is extremely difficult to find justification for this simple method of treating later evidence. Now, it should be unwise on any-one's part to reject later tradition merely because it is much later to the events; and there is no doubt that tradition, as a valid form of evidencc, can provide useful clues to past probabilities but later tradition cannot be acceptcd literally and it seldom leads to any certainties about the past.

The point may be illustrated with a specific example. One of the favourite authorities for what happened on the Baisakhi of 1699 A.D. is the *Tarikh-i-Punjab* by Ghulam Muhiyuddin *alias* Bute Shah. One passage from this work in which Guru Gobind Singh is supposed to be addressing the great gathering at Anandpur on that Baisakhi day is often quoted with approval:

> Let all embrace one creed and obliterate differences of religion. Let the four Hindu castes who have different rules for their guidance abandon them all, adopt the one form of adoration, and become brothers. Let no one deem himself superior to another. Let none pay heed to the Ganges, and other places of pilgrimage which are spoken of with reverence in the Shastars, or adore incarnations such as Ram, Krishan, Brahma and Durga but believe in Guru Nanak and other Sikh Gurus. Let men of the four castes receive my baptism, eat of one dish, and feel no disgust or contempt for one another (*The Sikh Religion*, V, 93-94).

This description is so graphic that some modern historians have believed it to be the report of some eyewitness. But the authority of this passage rests on nothing more than its plausibility. In fact this passage becomes plausible only when it is taken out of its context. The speech which Ghulam Muhiyuddin ascribes to Guru Gobind Singh begins with a significant statement :

> You should remember that the Musalmans have maltreated us. They have killed our ancestors and, having been uprooted from our homes, we have taken refuge from their tyranny in these mountains. Now, in accordance with the mandatory wish of my father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, I cherish the desire of avenging myself upon my father's murderers (*SHR* 1288, 405).

This statement is significant because, in Ghulam Muhiyuddin's considered view, the one consuming passion of Guru Gobind Singh was vengeance : 'so long as I live', he is made to say earlier, 'I shall meditate revenge, to the point of risking my life in pursuit of this purpose' (*SHR* 1288, 397). It was for this purpose that, according to Ghulam Muhiyuddin, Guru Gobind Singh had taken an irrevokable decision to muster armies and conquer territories (*SHR* 1288, 400); and it was for this very purpose that he was creating the Khalsa.

Now, Ghulam Muhiyuddin attributes this motive to Guru Gobind Singh on an obvious assumption about human psychology that a son would naturally think of vengeance upon his father's murderer. Ghulam Muhiyuddin's extremely faulty chronology would lend further support to his assumption : the creation of the Khalsa is placed by him soon after the execution of Guru Tegh Bahadur in 1675; and all the battles of Guru Gobind Singh follow upon the creation of the Khalsa. Furthermore, the political ambition suggested simply by Guru Gobind Singh's armed conflict with some of the Hill Chiefs and Mughal officials, would be confirmed by the later political success of the Khalsa who themselves attributed it to the grace of their Guru. In the political aspirations thus ascribed to Guru Gobind Singh, one can see a backward projection of what happened later on.

If Ghulam Muhiyuddin's whole account of Guru Gobind Singh is analysed, it becomes possible to see that he was basing himself either on the tradition which had developed during the past hundred years or on his immediate predecessors rather than on any early evidence. This is evident from his treatment, for instance, of the episode of the Goddess, the forecast about the end of the *masands* in the future, the wanderings of Guru Gobind Singh after the battle of Chamkaur, the composition of the *Dasam*

Granth at Talwandi Sabo, the cause and circumstance of Guru Gobind Singh's death. In fact, Ghulam Muhiyuddin does not betray any anxiety about early evidence and we may be certain that the speech which he attributes to Guru Gobind Singh on the day of creating the Khalsa is purely an imaginative feat of the author. It may also be pointed out that direct speech was a stylistic feature of the author of many a chronicle and the *Tarikh-i-Punjab* is quite full of it. It may therefore be safely stated that this particular passage deserves no special credence.

If we analyse the chronicles of Budh Singh, Bakht Mal, Khushwaqt Rai, Ahmad Shah of Batala, Ganesh Das, Sohan Lal Suri and Aliuddin, we find that the character of their work is not essentially different from that of Ghulam Muhiyddin's *Tarikh-i-Punjab*. One may discover them depending occasionally on the still earlier chroniclers for one small detail or another; but in their presentation also, the creation of the Khalsa is invariably related to the idea of revenge, political ambition and the episode of the Goddess—an interpretation which is rejected even by those who quote Ghulam Muhiyuddin with implicit approval. Indubhushan Banerjee, for instance, argues at length against the alleged worship of Durga by Guru Gobind Singh on the eve of instituting the Khalsa (*Evolution of the Khalsa*, II, 97–108). His argument is grounded on a twofold principle : the confrontation of later tradition with contemporary evidence and the possibility of later invention under changed historical circumstance. Not much of the later tradition would survive the test of this twofold principle; but Banerjee does not apply it rigorously to all the later evidence.

Nevertheless, much of the later tradition has already been discarded by the modern historians. The general consensus is confined to a few prominent articles—a big gathering at Anandpur on the Baisakhi of 1699, the dramatic and awesome call for the laying down of life for the Guru, the offer of their heads by the five beloved, their initiation into the Khalsa through the baptism of the two-edged sword or the *khande ki pahul*, the acceptance of the *pahul* by Guru Gobind Singh from the five beloved, Guru Gobind Singh's address to the gathering, the acceptance of the *pahul* by eighty thousand persons and its rejection by many of the *brahmans* and *khatris*, the injunctions regarding the essential *rehat* of the five k's (*kesha*, *kirpan*, *kara*, *kanga* and *kachha*), the adoption of the appellation of 'singh' by the Khalsa, injunctions regarding abstinence from tobacco and other intoxicants, the enunciation of a distinct way of life for the Khalsa, the vesting of the Guruship in the Khalsa *panth* and in the *Adi Granth*.

If we turn to contemporary and near contemporary evidence, enough of this detail gets confirmed, but not all. That a considerable number of the Sikhs used to visit Anandpur at the time of Baisakhi and that on the Baisakhi of 1699 many of the Sikhs were specially asked to come, that the *khande ki pahul* was administered to those who were willing to become the Guru's Khalsa (though no exact figures are mentioned anywhere), that a considerable number of people — the *brahmans* and *khatris* in particular— rejected the *pahul*, that the Khalsa were required to wear their *keshas* and arms, that they were required not to smoke, that the appellation of 'singh' came to be adopted by a large number of the Khalsa — all this is there in the earliest evidence. But the dramatic call for the laying down of life for the Guru, his request to the five beloved that they should initiate him into the Khalsa by administering *pahul*, the vesting of the Guruship in either the Khalsa *panth* or the *Adi Granth* — all these very important and inter-related items are not to be found in the available contemporary evidence. In fact, in the near contemporary records left to posterity by the Sikhs themselves, there are frequent references to 'five-weapons' rather than to five k's; and the *Adi Granth* is not given an exclusive preference over the *bani* of Guru Gobind Singh.

All these vital points are sanctified by the belief of a large number of the followers of Guru Gobind

Singh from the late eighteenth century down to the present day. It may be argued in fact that the strength of that belief goes in favour of their authenticity. It is not being suggested that their authenticity is definitely unwarranted. But one cannot help thinking that the authenticity of these vital points is yet to be firmly established, unless of course one refuses to think historically and for oneself. Search for more contemporary evidence must be made; the later tradition and the historical circumstance under which it came into existence must be thoroughly examined; and, meanwhile, the historian may suspend his judgment on these vital points.

Notes

I

1. Sarkar, Jadunath *History of Aurangzib*, II, 393.
2. *Muntakhib-ul-Lubab*, Calcutta, 1884, II, 654.
3. For this brief statement, the chief source of our information is Goswamy, B. N. *The Social Background of Kangra Valley Painting*. We have drawn upon the information spread over the entire body of the work in making the above statement and find it unnecessary to give specific references.

   See also, Appendix A for some of the contemporary Hill Chiefs, and the map depicting their principalities.
4. The contemporary Sujan Rai Bhandari was particularly struck by the defensive strength of Guler, Chamba and Kahlur. Describing the course of the river Sutlej, he says for instance, 'the king of Kahlur by reason of the strength afforded by this river, the inaccessibility of the hills, and the security of his residence, – the city of Bilaspur is his seat of Government, – swerves from (obedience to) the Imperial Officers'. Sarkar, Jadunath *The India of Aurangzib*, 103, 104, 102.
5. *Dabistan-i-Mazahib* (Ganda Singh, *Makhiz-i-Tawarikh-i Sikhan*, 33.)
6. *Loc. cit.*
7. *Loc. cit.*
8. *Ibid.*, 46, 47, 43–44. Muhsin Fani expresses his appreciation for this sacrifice of life in devotion to the Guru by quoting an apt quatrain.
9. Macauliffe, M. A. *The Sikh Religion*, Oxford, 1909, II, 294.
10. *Dabistan-i-Mazahib* (Ganda Singh's *Makhiz*, 48.)

11. *Ibid.*, 49.

12. *Ibid* ., 48.

13. Elsewhere also, Bhai Gurdas attaches the same significance to the *sangat ;*
Sadh sangat sach-khand vich
Satgur purkh vase nirankara
Hazara Singh and Vir Singh, editors, *Varan Bhai Gurdas*, 106.

14. *Dabistan-i-Mazahib* (Ganda Singh's *Makhiz*, 33–34, 35, 48.)

15. *Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh*, Delhi, 1918, 70. For a more literal, but slightly misleading, translation of this passage, see, Sarkar, Jadunath, *The India of Aurangzib*, 91.

16. Macauliffe, M. A. *The Sikh Religion*, Oxford, 1909, IV, 76–77.

II

1. We are quite aware of the disagreement about the date and even the year in which Guru Gobind took birth but do not intend entering into any discussion on the subject here. We have, for the purposes of this biography, accepted 7 Poh Sudi Sambat 1723, given in an old MS lying in Patna Gurdwara and inscribed on a commemoration tablet there as Guru's exact date of birth. This date is also given in *Suraj Parkash* and *Gur Bilas*. Parsinni Sehgal, *Guru Gobind Singh Aur Unka Kaviya*, 32–33. For other dates and discussion on them see, Khazan Singh, *Philosophy of Sikh Religion*. I. 62: Ganda Singh, *Makhiz-i-Twarikh-i-Sikhan*, 7; W. Irvine, *Later Mughals*, I, f.n. on 84.

2. *Bachittar Natak*; vii, 2

3. *Suraj Parkash*, III, Rash 11–Ansu 48, 2078, Sujan Rai Bhandari (ed. Hasan, Delhi, n.d.), 70; Macauliffe, M. A. *The Sikh Religions*, Chand & Co., 1963, IV, 344.

4. *Suraj Parkash*, III, Rash 11–Ansu 12, 1985.

5. Dhir Mal was the son of Gurditta, the eldest son of Guru Hargobind. Gurditta would have most probably succeeded his father as a Guru, if he had not died when Guru Hargobind was still alive. The Guruship, however, remained with Gurditta's off-springs after the sixth Guru. Har Rai, the seventh Guru, was Gurditta's son and Har Kishan, the eighth Guru was his grandson. Dhir Mal as Har Rai's brother and Har Krishan's uncle felt he had a better right to the pontificate than Tegh Bahadur who had been earlier superseded twice.

6. Guru Harkrishan died at Delhi on 30 March 1664 (14 chet 1721). Guru Tegh Bahadur seems to have been recognized the Guru in June or July 1664 and remained at Baba Bakala for about six months after getting the pontificate. He was, however, troubled, by his rivals a great deal. A *masand*, Sihan by name actually tried to shoot him. *Khazan Singh Op. Cit*, I, 163; Mac. *Op. Cit*, IV, 330, 336, 338; Teja Singh Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, I, 51.

7. Tegh Bahadur stayed at Kiratpur only for two or three months. He moved out to lay the foundation of Makhowal in July 1665 (21 Har 1722). Khazan Singh. *Op. Cit*, I, 151; Macauliffe, M. A. *Op.Cit*. IV, 338.

8. Tegh Bahadur left Makhowal and the Punjab in December 1665 after staying in the new township for about six months. Khazan Singh, *Op.Cit*, 151.

9. In this connection, it should be worth remembering that at the time of Gobind's birth at Patna, Bhiken Shah visited Teg Bahadur's family there. The Guru must have been in regular communication with the Punjab, otherwise Bhikhen Shah, a friend and admirer of Tegh Bahadur could not have known that the Guru's family was at Patna and time his own visit to Bihar when Gujari was to give birth to a child. Macauliffe, M.A. *Op.Cit*, iv, 359.

10. Guru Hargobind's second wife; married in 1617; gave birth to Ani Rai, Atal Rai, and Tegh Bahadur; the first two died quite early; came to Bakala in 1664 with his son Tegh Bahadur when Hargobind decided that Har Rai would succeed him; remained at Bakala with his son for more than twenty years; was in her late fiftees when Tegh Bahadur left the Punjab; remained at Patna with Gujari and looked after Gobind in his early childhood; came back to Anandpur in 1672 and lived there till Gobind left for Paonta in 1685; was alive when Ajit was born in 1689; died soon after and most probably at Paonta. M.A. Macauliffe, *Op.Cit*, III, 71, IV 50, 67, 68, 70, 223, 331, 361, 364; Lachman Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, 69.

11. Daughter of Lal Chand of Kartarpur (Jullundur distt); married to Tegh Bahadur in 1672 when he was ten years old; a devoted companion of her husband at Bakala, Patna and Makhowal; stayed with Guru Gobind Singh, her only son, after the martyrdom of Tegh Bahadur; left Anandpur when Gobind was forced to leave the town in the winter of 1704; strayed away from the Guru's party, with the two younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh and took shelter with Gangu, an old servant of the Guru; betrayed to Wazir Khan, the Sarhind governor; died broken hearted, on hearing of the execution of her two grandsons, on 27 December 1704. Macaliffe, M. A. *Op. Cit*, IV, 331, 344, 348, 357, 364, 379, 386 V, 5, 195, 199. Ganda Singh *Banda Singh Bahadur*, 58.

12. G. B. Singh, 'Sikh Relics in Eastern Bengal', *Modern Review*. 1915, vol 18, pp 197–198.

13. *Suraj Parkash*, 111, Rash 11–Ansu 59, 2103

14. *Ibid*. 111, Rash 11–Ansu 10, 2128–20.

15. It was Guru Teg Bahadur who decided that the name of his son was to be Gobind Rai. This name caused much embarassment to Nanaki and Gujari. According to Indian custom the wife is not expected to take the name of the husband. The daughter-in-law would also avoid bringing the name of her father-in-law on her lips. 'Gobind' resembled 'Hargobind' so closely that to take the first name amounted to taking the name of the sixth Guru. Nanaki and Gujari avoided the embarassment by calling the child Shyam. *Gur Bilas*, 50.

16. Mughals had successfully brought the whole of Assam under their control when early in Aurangzib's reign, Mir Jumla defeated Ahoms, a tribe inhabiting the north eastern parts of Assam and forced them to recognise Mughal over-lordship. The Ahoms revolted and captured Gauhati where the Mughals had their Assamese headquarters. When Aurangzib heard the news in December 1667 he immeditely ordered Ram Singh to proceed to Assam. The Rajput General, perhaps afraid of going to the unknown Assam without adequate preparation, took unduly long time to reach Assam. He reached Ranghmati in February 1669 and it was here that he met Guru Tegh Bahadur for the first time J. N. Sarkar, *History of Aurangzib* (Calcutta 1928), III, 187; Teja Singh Ganda Singh, *Op.Cit*, 55.

17. Ram Singh's position in Assam was bad right from the beginning. He had only 8,000 troops with him when he reached Ranghmati but found himself facing a popular rebellion, almost a nation in arms His difficulties increased because the Mughal faujdar of Gauhati non-cooperated with him. His position became precarious when the 'Rani' cut him off from his detachment in the rear and desperate when on the invitation of the Ahoms, Nagas came to help them and inflicted 'a series set back,' on him in the second half of 1670. Sarkar, J. N. *Op.Cit*, III, 187–190.

18. According to Sikh tradition, Guru Tegh Bahadur brought about peace between Ram Singh and Ram Rai, the 'Raja of

Assam'. It is obvious that this Raja was not the King of Ahom, though Macauliffe would like us believe so. The name of the Ahom King who led the rebellion against the Mughals was Chakradhawaj, and the Sikh tradition makes no mention of that name anywhere. It appears to us that Ram Rai was an influential chieftain fighting on the side of Ahoms but who changed sides under the influnence of the Guru to strengthen the Rajput General considerably. Guru Tegh Bahadur may well have organise a regular meeting between the two and helped them reach an agreement which the Sikh tradition in its understable attempt to build up the Guru has make to appear as a regular agreement ending the war between Ahom and Raja Ram Singh. Sarkar, J. N. *Op.Cit*, III, 189; Macauliffe, M.A. *Op.Cit*, IV. 353–355.

19. Guru moved back to Makhowal in great hurry. This is reflected in his "original letters" preserved at the Sikh Gurdwara in Patna. Guru Tegh Bahadur could not have been particularly keen to reach Makhowal with great speed unless he had believed that his immediate presence there was necessary to regain his position in the Punjab. Teja Singh Ganda Singh, *Op.Cit*, 54 and f. note on the same page.

20. The Sikh sraditon has preserved the simple fact of Shiv Dutt's interest in Tegh Bahadur's family, particularly the young son, in the form of a *Sakhi* in which Gobind appears as a divine spirit and Shiv Dutt as an adoring disciple. Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, 23.

21. *Ibid*, 22.

22. *Ibid*, 23.

23. The garden and the village are still attached to Patna Gurdwara. *Loc. Cit*.

24. Guru Hargobind used to wear two swords. According to traditional Sikh interpretation, they were meant to represent the two authorities of the Guru, spiritual and temporal If that is so, Hargobind was not only dramatising the total claim of the Sikh Guru over the disciples' but also indicating his readiness to oppose tyranny with arms. The choice of swords to symbolise Guru's authorities was indicative of the transformation that had taken place in the temper of the Sikh *panth* as a consequence of the martyrdom of Guru Arjan.

25. Of the four battles that Guru Hargobind fought against the Mughals' the first three were fought in the Amritsar district.

26. *Gur Bilas*, 53; Lachman Singh, *Op. Cit*, 3.
27. *Suraj Parkash*, III, Ras. 12–Ansu 21, 2155.

28. For full details read 'Bal Kotak', 'Bal Choj' and 'Bal Leela' in *Suraj Parkash* and based on them Bhai Vir Singh's *Bala Pritam*. *Suraj Parkash*, III, Ras. 12–Ansu 17–20, 2144–52; Bhai Vir Singh, *Bala Pritam* (Khalsa Tract Society, Amritsar. n. d.)

29. G.C. Narang, *Transformation of Sikhism* (New Delhi, 1956), 77; Teja Singh, *Op. Cit*, 60.

30. *Suraj Parkash*. III, Ras. 12–Ansu–26, 2164.

31. Kartar Singh, *Op. Cit*, 26.

32. *Gur Bilas*, 68–71; Bhai Vir Singh, 'Guru ji da pahila safar' in *Sri Kalgidhar Chamatkar* 50–52.

33. *Suraj Parkash*, Ras 12–Ansu 45, 2197–2198.

34. The party reached Lakhnaur in July. That is the time when rains start on the foot of the Shiwaliks but the rains alone would not explain why they should have stayed there for seven months. We cannot, however, accept Bhai Santokh Singh's explanation that when the party reached Lakhnaur, it received a message from Guru Tegh Bahadur that he was proceeding to Delhi and that Guru Gobind and the party stayed at Lakhnaur for as many as seven months to know of Tegh Bahadur's fate at Delhi and that it was only after they had heard of Tegh Bahadur's execution that they moved to Anandpur. This would put Gobind's return to Makhowal in 1675 or alternatively the martyrdom of Tegh Bahadur in 1672. Neither of the two hypotheses can stand critical examination. Moreover, if we were to accept Santokh Singh, we shall have to agree with him that Gobind did not meet Tegh Bahadur on his coming to the Punjab from Patna. That is contradicted by Guru Gobind's own statement in the *Bachittar Natak* that after his return from Patna, he received 'moral and physical' education from his father at Makhowal. *Suraj Parkash*. Ras. 12–Ansu 45, 2200,–01; *Bachittar Natak*, viii, 3, Macauliffe, M.A. *Op. Cit*, IV. 368 f.n.

35. Macauliffe. M. A. *Op. Cit*, IV, 366.

36. Bhai Santokh Singh suggests that Bhiken Shah liked to see Gobind play these games. Macauliffe writes that Guru's guardians arranged that Gobind should play these games by design when at Lakhnaur they placed him under the tutorship of one Magan. Kartar Singh says that when Bhiken Shah saw Gobind play these games, he felt that the child would not only be an able successor of Teg Bahadur but would grow up to become a unique leader of men. *Suraj Parkash*, II , Ras. 12–Ansu 46, 2201–2202; Macauliffe, M. A. *Op. Cit*, 28–29; Kartar Singh, *Op. Cit*, 28–29.

37. *Bachittar Natak* vii, 3.

38. Teja Singh Ganda Singh *Op. Cit*, 60; Khazan Singh, *Op. Cit*, I, 163. According to Teja Singh Ganda Singh the descendants of Pir Muhammad have an autograph letter with them. It was given to Pir Muhammad by Guru Gobind in appreciation of his services as a teacher.

39. Lachman Singh believes that Guru Gobind had a very efficient Rajput tutor to train him in martial exercises. He pays this tutor of the Guru a well deserved compliment by describing him as an 'expert Rajput' but does not give us the name of that excellent coach. Khazan Singh calls this tutor Bajar Singh Rajput but the peculiarity of the name Bajar creates the impression that perhaps Khazan Singh made a mistake and Bajar was the surname of the tutor. Joginder Singh appears to regard Bajar to be a subcaste and so says that Gobind's tutor in martial exercises was 'Bajar Rajput'. Lachman Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh* 5. Khazan Singh, *Op. Cit*. 1, 63; Joginder Singh Ramdeo, *Panjabi Likhari Kosh*, III.

40. Guru Gobind wrote extensively in Braj Bhasha. In fact his compositions, as preserved in *Dasam Granth*, are mostly in that language.

41. His Persian compositions, *Zafarnama* and *Hakayat*, reveal an excellent grounding in that language.

42. When Guru Gobind Singh finished writing *Chandi di Var* an excellent Panjabi composition, he was hardly twenty-one.

43. Almost all the biographers of Guru Gobind Singh give an erroneous impression that he began the literary *darbar* and made it famous by collecting fifty-two poets of rare literary talent in it. Actually the tenth guru inherited the 'Darbar' from Tegh Bahadur. According to Bhai Kahan Singh, the

ninth Guru had a number of poets at Makhowal. Ashta, D. P. the *Poetry of Dasam Granth*, 32.

44. Braj Bhasha was the language of the learned in mid seventeenth century. Many poets in Tegh Bahadur's darbar wrote their verses in Braji. Guru Tegh Bahadur also wrote in Braji character. *Loc. Cit*

45. Almost all the biographies on Guru Gobind Singh give an erroneous impression that he was the innovator of the literary *darbar* with which the tradition associates fifty-two poets. Actually the tenth Guru inherited the Darbar from Tegh Bahadur, if not the earlier Gurus. The ninth Guru had a literary Darbar and we had a number of poets with him at Makhowal. Ashta, D. P. *The Poetry of Dasam Granth*, 32.

46. In mid seventeenth century, Braj Bhasha was the language of the learned. In Teg Bahadur's literary *darbar*, there are many poets who wrote their verses in Braji character. *Loc. Cit*.

47. Future Bhai Mani Singh. son of Kalet, the Dulat *Chaudhari* of Kaimboval; presented by the father to Tegh Bahadur's *darbar* at the age of six or seven; almost the same age as Gobind and one of the playmates of the future Guru; of a literary bent of mind; when grown up a prominent associate of Gobind, particularly in literary activities of the tenth Guru; took Matas Sundari and Sahiban to Delhi when Guru Gobind was forced to leave Anandpur in 1704; brought them to Damdama in 1705; accompanied Guru and Sahiban to Deccan; came back to Delhi, with Sahiban; after Guru's death patched up differences between *Bandais* and *Tat Khalsa* in 1716; held charge of *Darbar Sahib* at Amritsar from 1716 to 1737; collected Guru's writings and composed *Dasan Granth* in 1734; suffered martyrdom at the hands of Zakariya khan in 1737; For full details, see Kohli, S. S. *Bhai Mani Singh*.

48. Gulab Rai and Sham Dass, the grandsons's of Suraj Mal; ancestors of the Sodhi families well known as jagirdars of Anandpur Makhowal; Maharaja Ranjit Singh was extremely indulgent to them; British on becoming the masters of Jullundur Doab in 1846 also showed great considerations to to these descendants of the Sikh Guru. Macauliffe. M. A. *Op. Cit*, IV, 367 Cunningham J.D. *A Short History of the Sikhs* (1955 reprint), geneological table of the Guru facing

page 348; Bal, S. S. *British Policy towards the Panjab, 1844–1849*, chapter III.

49. Bibi Viro, the only daughter of Guru Hargobind; married to Sadhu son of Dharma, a Khosla Khatri of Jhabal in Amritsar district; gave birth to five sons : Shango Shah Jit Mal, Gopal Chand, Ganga Ram and Mehri Chand; her sons commanded units of Guru's army in the battle of Bhangani. Shango Shah and Jit Mal died fighting. Macauliffe, M.A. *Op.Cit*, IV, 66, 84, 144, 336, V, 2,32.36,43, 45, 46; Trilochan Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, f.n. on p. 14.

50. Son of an old servant of Guru Tegh Bahadur; played with Gobind in childhood; at Paonta acted as Guru's Dewan; according to Sikh tradition sent to Srinagar (Garhwal) to attend the marriage of Fateh Shah's daughter; his daring escape enabled the Guru know of the impending attack on Paonta and take timely precautions to win the battle of Bhangani; faltered in devotion to the Guru only late in life; ran to Kartarpur; killed by Dhirmalias. Macauliffe M. A. *Op. Cit*. V, 2, 12, 15, 24, 29, 36, 41, 44, 56, 87, 89.

51. Sujan Rai Bhandari, *Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh* (ed. Hasan Delhi), 75; Ganda Singh, *Makhiz-i-Tawarikh-i-Sikhan*, 57.

52. Shah Jahan fell ill in September 1675 and in the belief that he was about to die, his four grown up sons began fighting for the throne. The third son, Aurangzib proved to be the cleverest of them. He hoodwinked the youngest into joining him in defeating the other two. He imprisoned his father and arrested his erstwhile collaborator, Murad and proclaimed himself to be the Emperor.

53. *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, 232. cited by Sarkar, J. N. *History of Aurangzib*, III (Calcutta 1928), 282.

54. Aurangzib to Bidar Bakht in *Kalimat-i-Tayyibat*, 7 b. as translated and cited by Sarkar J. N. *ibid*; 282.

55. *Farman* given in *Mirat-i-Ahmadi*, 273. see J. N. Sarkar for translation. *Ibid*, 282.

56. Aurangzib went in for a grand coronation ceremony on 5 June 1662. This was his second coronation which was necessary perhaps because the earlier one went unnoticed. His brothers then appeared to be still strong contenders for the throne. *Maasar-i-Alamgiri* (translated and annotated by Sarkar. Calcutta 1946), 13

57. Aurangzib's Banaras Farman addressed to Abul Hasan, 28 Feburary 1659, as translated and cited by J. N. Sarkar, *History of Aurangzib*, III, 281.

58. *Maasar-i-Alamgiri*, 81. as translated and cited in *ibid*, 283-284.

59. *Muraqa'at-i-Abul-Hasan*, 202. as cited and translated by Sri Ram Sharma, *The Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors* (New york 1962), 130.

60. Sarkar, J. N. *History of Aurangzib*, 267. Side by side with destruction of temples, Aurangzib was busy converting Hindus to Islam. The temptations offered were jobs promotions and pardon for the crimes committed. We are thankful to Dr. S. P. Sangar for giving a long list of such converts which he had drawn from *Akhbarat-i-darbar-i-Maulla* (Jaipur) in the National Library, Calcutta.

60. Muraqat-i-Abul Hasan, 202.

62. A letter preserved in the Yasho-Madhav Temple of Dhamrai in the Deccan district. J. N. Sarkat, *Op. Cit*, iii, 283.

63. *Akhbarat* 13th year sheet 17, as translated and given in J: N. Sarkar *History of Aurangzib*, III 283.

64. A Sikh Gurdwara in those days would be a simple place, having a *Manij* (Cot) in it, permanently decorated and perhaps venerated No body would sit on its unless it be Guru himself or his special representative when come on a visit to that place. The building would be under the charge of a devout Sikh or a *Mahant* who would collect the tithe (*daswandh*) for the Guru.

65. Khafi Khan, *Maasar-i-Alamgiri*, ii, 652. cited by J. N. Sarkar, *History of Aurangzib*, iii, 312.

66. Teja Singh Ganda Singh, Op. Cit, 56.

67. *Suraj Parkash*, iii, Rash 12–Ansu 31, 2173–74; M. A. Macauliffe *Up. Cit*, iv, 374; Teja Singh Ganda Singh, *Op. Cit*, 56.

68. Bambzai P.N.K. *A History of Kashmir*, 37. The author gives the name of the man whom Aurangzib appointed the Governor of Kashmir in 1671 as Iftikhar Khan but from the account given by him, it is clear that he is referring to the same man whom the Sikh tradition remembers as Sher

Afghan. Perhaps the latter was a title. Aurangzib had appointed him to take charge from Saif Khan who was the governor of Kashmir from 1664 to 1667 and again from 1668 to 1671. Saif Khan who built bridges, laid out vast gardens and settled many villages was a liberal and broad-minded individual and had a Hindu to advise him in administrative policies.

69. The Sikh tradition tells us that Sher Afghan went about his work with extreme bigotry. There must be much historical truth in what the Sikh tradition says, for we find sobre historians rejecting details but accepting the fact that the Kashmir governor, Sher Afghan, was a zealous executor of Aurangzib's religious policy. *Suraj Parkash*, III, Lash 12-Ansu 28, 2168-70; I. B. Banerjee, *Op. Cit*, II, 59; M. A. Macauliffe, *Op. Cit*, IV, 369–370; Kartar Singh, *Op. Cit*, 31, Lachman Singh, *Op. Cit*, 59.

70. Guru Hargobind had fought four battles with the Mughals between 1628 and 1632 during the reign of Shah Jahan. The site of the first three battle fields lies in present Amritsar district. Only the last battle was fought out of that district.

71. *Suraj Parkash*, III, Ras 12-Ansu 28, 2169; M. A. Macauliffe *Op. Cit*, IV, 371; Khazan Singh, *Op. Cit*, I, 155.

72. The account generally given is based on what Sukha Singh wrote about ninety years after the demise of the Guru. We are told that Pandits related the sad lot of the Kashmiri Hindus and sought Guru's advice on how meet the tyranny. The pathetic story set Tegh Bahadur thinking. While he was silently sitting and was meditating on the problem, Gobind then a child of nine, came playing. On finding the Guru rather sbd, Gobind enquired as to what troubled him. Tegh Bahadur told the cause of his worry to the child with the remark that the best way of stopping the religious tyranny was to prevail upon some holy man to sacrifice his life for *dharma* "Who can be holier than you" Gobind enquired suggestively and that settled the matter. Tegh Bahadur told the Kashmiri Pandits that they must go to Aurangzib and tell him that if the Mughal Emperor were to convert Tegh Bahadur to Islam, they would follow suit. The Kashmiri Pandits did what they were told to do with the result that Guru Tegh Bahadur was summoned to Delhi and in due course put to death. *Gur Bilas*, 81;

73. The Sikh *Sangat* at Agra must have been pretty strong and devoted to the Guru. It had not forgotten the injustice done to the Sikh community even eleven months after the execution of Tegh Bahadur. We are told that when Aurangzib went to Agra in October 1676, the 'guru's followers were furious and one of them even threw a brick at the Emperor.' The daring man must have been the leader of Agra *sangat*. Sarkar. *Op. Cit*, III, 313.

74. Macauliffe, M. A. *Op. Cit*, IV, 378.

75. Sujan Rai Bhandari, *Khulasat-ut-Tawarikh*, (ed. Hassan Delhi n. d.) 70; Bakht Mal, *Tawarikh-i-Sikhan*. f. 129. cited by Nijjar, B. S. *Punjab under the Great Mughals*, 107.

76. Macauliffe, M. A. *Op. Cit*. V, 382.

77. Mati Dass, from the manner of his death, is referred to in the *Ardas* as one sawn to death. For a reference in an English translation of the Sikh Ardas, see C. H. Loehlin, *The Sikhs and their scriptures*, 40.

78. *Adi Granth*-Mohala ix, Shalok 56.

III

1. Sikh scholars are not unanimous in fixing the event on the Baisakhi of 1776. Some put it a little earlier on Magh 2 Sudi Tij Sambat 1733. We, however, feel that it was, in all probablity, the Baisakhi day. Lachman Singh *Guru Gobind Singh*, 21; Gian Singh *Shri Dasmesh Chamatkar*, 72.

2. Santokh Singh, *Sri Gurpartap Suraj Parkash* (Amritsar annotated by Bhai Vir Singh), 111, Rut 1–Ansu 5, 2258.

3. *Ibid*, 111, Rut–1 Ansu 36, 2315–2317.

4. Perhaps the most logical explanation from among the Sikh writers comes from Santokh Singh who writes that the Guru opposed the change because of the strategic importance of Makhowal and its being a 'safe place'. The *Masands* we are told wanted the change because they were greedy and wanted to pocket the offerings likely to come to the Guru at the new headquarters which they believed would be under their control. *Ibid*, 111 Rut–1 Ansu 16, 2316–2317.

5. We feel we are quite justified in presuming that for the next nine years (i.e. when Gobind was between nine and eighteen years old) all that the Sikh tradition attributes to the Guru was primarily the acts of Kripal. *Suraj Parkash's* account of the way Kripal arranged and directed the ceremony installing Gobind the Guru and acted on special occasions between 1675 and 1685 encourages us in making that presumption. We believe we come very near the historical truth in attributing guardianship of the Guru to Kripal also because of the respectful language that the Guru uses while refering to 'uncle Kripal' in *Bachittar Natak*.

6. During the pontificacy of Guru Hargobind, his eldest son Gurditta had established himself at Kiratpur in 1627 and had brought about important conversions in the Malwa and Doaba areas of the Punjab. He was ably supported by Almast, Gonda, Hansa and Suthra Shah. They founded *dhuans* and *bakshishes* to carry on their proselytising activities. Har Rai when he became the Guru continued his father's work of bringing more people in Malwa and Doaba to the sikh fold with enthusiasm. Some of the wellknown

conversions of this period include the ancestors of the Phulkian house and Bhai families of Kaithal and Bagrian. He had enthusiastic preachers in Bhagat Bhagwan and after their conversions the Bhais of Kaithal and Bagrian. Macauliffe, M.A. *The Sikh Religion*, Chand & Co., 1963. IV, 149, 150, 290, 292,; Teja Singh Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, 48, 49; Rose, H. A. *A Glossary of the Tribes and Castes of the Punjab and North-West Frontier Province, 133.*

7. Read Bhai Santokh Singh's account of the reception received by Tegh Bahadur in his Malwa tours. *Suraj Parkash*, 111, Ras 12–Ansu 25 to 29, 2172–82.

8. *Dehra Dun Gazetteer*, 72.

9. Gobind seems to have got a good grounding in Firdausi's *Shahnama*. Apart from the direct reference that the Guru makes to Firdausi in his *zafarnama*, we notice that he uses the same metre in his famous epistle to Aurangzib as is to be found in *Shahnama*. He also refers to ancient Persian kings, probably deriving his knowledge of them from Firdausi. see *zafarnama* baits 100, 126, 127. 128, 140.

10. Gobind's early writings were based on his good knowledge of the *Puranas*. *Chandi Charittar Ukat Bilas* and *Krishan Avatar*, written by him when he was in his early twenties, were based on *Markandya* and *Bhagvat Puranas*. Guru Gobind could not have written these compositions at this young age if he had not done well with the *Puranas* quite early in life.

11. In the battles of Nadaun, he fired the musket to change the fortune of the war. His proficiency in the use of the weapon then must have been the result of training during the period under study. *Bachittar Natak*, ix, 17

12. In the battle of Nadaun, Guru Gobind shot arrows with both the right and the left hands with deadly effect on Alif Khan and his supporters. *Bachittar Natak*, ix, 18.

13. Ashta, D. P. *The Poetry in Dasam Granth*.

14. The generally accepted date is 7 July (23 Har 1734) Macauliffe, M. A. *Op.Cit*, V, 2; Greenlees, D. *The Gospel of Guru Granth Sahib*.

15. The later Sikh tradition got confused about the engagement ceremony held in 1673 and the marriage celebration of 1677.

Perhaps that was natural because both were held at Makhowal. It is not surprising, therefore, to find some of the biographers of Guru Gobind Singh putting Gobind's marriage with Jito in the former year. Lala Daulat Rai, *Sawan-i-Umri Guru Gobind Singh*, 85; Hakim Ram Kishan *Janam Sakhi*, 10-11.

16. *Suraj Parkash*, 111, Rut 1–Ansu 9, 2265.

17. The legend that Bhikia came to Makhowal and established a new township in its neighbourhood to perform the ceremony in a manner befitting Gobind's position and his own social status among the Sikhs seems to have sprung up in the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries when the extent of show and pomp that went with the marriage celebration were regarded as the measure of family's standing in society.

18. Muhsin Fani, *Dabistan-i-mazahib*. 235–236, as given in Ganda Singh, *Makhiz*, 40

19. Anandpur was founded in 1678. Guru Gobind was only twelve years old then and the site must have been selected by Kripal. Ross, D. *The Land of the Five Rivers, Historical and Descriptive Sketches*, 213.

20. The Guru was presented with a costly tent by Duni Chand of Kabul in 1680 but even earlier Kripal must have arranged for the Guru a tent in which he could hold his *darbar*. The Sikh tradition would like us believe that the tent presented by Duni Chand was the envy of kings and 'not to be found even with the king of Delhi'. Such a tent was likely to be presented only if the practice of the Guru sitting in a tent was already in vogue. Similarly though the famous Parsadi elephant was also presented to the Guru only in 1680, we can be sure that Gobind's establishment, as set by Kripal, had elephants in it even before that. Khazan Singh, *History and Philosophy of Sikh Religion*, I, 164; Gian Singh, *Shri Dashmesh Chamatkar*, 76; Kartar Singh, *Op, Cit*. 57–58.

21. According to Sikh tradition, Raja Rattan Chand of Assam came to Makhowal and met Gobind in 1680. Obviously he must have been invited by Kripal. Though the Sikh traditon has preserved the memory of only this chief coming to Makhowal, others must have come too. Rattan Chand's present of the famous Parsadi elephant and the fact that he came from very far must have made his visit, in retrospect, appear as the only important visit of a Raja.

We feel others were invited and came too. Khazan Singh *Op.Cit*, 164; Kartar Singh, *Op.Cit*. 57–58.

22. Gobind seems to have been so fascinated by a court with kingly appearances that later he maintained it even when that was likely to result in Auranzib taking some stern action against him. The regal look of Gobind's *darbar* is referred to by contemporary and near contemporary Persian writers as also by Sikh records. The Persian writers also tell us that Aurangzib wanted his *faujdars* on the north-west to see that Guru Gobind stopped practices that created the impression that the Guru was a Raja. Khushwaqt Rai. *Tawarikh-i-Sikhan* SHR 116, 32–33; Ganesh Das, *Tawarikh-i-Chahar Gulshan-i-Punjab*, SHR 1274, 154; Muhammad Qasim Lahori, *Ibrat Nama*, SHR. 1270, 1920; *Suraj Parkash*, II, Rut 1–Ansu 24, 2294; *Gur Bilas*, 104.

23. Hutchison, J. and Vogel, J. Ph., *History of the Punjab Hill States*, II, 502.

24. *Loc. Cit*.

25. See Appendix B.

26. Bhim Chand demanded 'parsadi elephant' presented to the Guru by the 'Raja of Assam'. The traditional Sikh accounts emphasise the beauty and other accompalishments of the elephant to make them as the chief reasons for Bhim Chand's insistence on having the animal. We feel that the Raja of Kahlur asked for the elephant to emphasise not only the fact that Guru's headquarters were situated in his territory but also to make it clear that with Guru's headquarters assuming the form of a military establishment he expected the Sikh pontificate to render him the feudal obligation of helping the overlord to maintain the state army in full readiness to meet external danger.

27. Rose, H. A. *A Glossary of Tribes and Castes of the Panjab and the North West Frontier Province*, III, 688. Rose puts Bhim Chand's defeat in 1682.

28. Guru Gobind was invited to Nahan by Medni Parkash who ascended to the Nahan *Gaddi* in 1684. Khazan Singh puts Guru's shift to that state in that very year but places the 'foundation' of Paonta in August 1685. But neither the Sikh tradition nor any other evidence tells us about the Sikh Guru staying for a long period of eight or nine months at

any place in Nahan before shifting to Paonta. We consequently feel that Guru actually moved to Nahan state in 1685. We get further support for our view from the fact that Guru's second marriage, as we shall note subsequently, took place in May 1685 at Makhowal. Khazan Singh, *Op. Cit*, 166; *Sirmur State Gazetter*, 10

29. Puran Singh, *The Ten Masters*, 100–103.
30. *Ibid*, 101–102.
31. *Ibid*, 102.
32. *Loc. Cit.*
33. Lachman Singh, *Op. Cit*, 27.
34. Parsinni Sehgal, *Guru Gobind Singh Aur Unka Kaviya*, 114.
35. Jap Sahib 1st verse, as translated by Trilochan Singh. *The Sikh Review*, May 1955, 34.
36. Ashta, D. P. *The Poetry of Dasam Granth*, 195.
37. Macauliffe. M. A. *Op. Cit*, V, 260.
38. Cunningham, J. D. *A History of the Sikhs*, 1955 reprint).
39. We feel Bhai Randhir Singh right in his opinion that the whole of *Akal Ustat* was not composed at one time but find no justification in his placing the composition of the initial verses in 1697–98 i.e. after he had already composed the bulk of *Akal Ustat.* We feel that Guru Gobind started composing these verses soon after he had written the last verse of *Jap.* Randhir Singh, *Shabd Murit*, 25.
40. Ashta, D. P. *Op. Cit.*, 37.
41. Guru Gobind was very keen to make it clear that he did not subscribe to the religious implication found in *Durga Shapt Shati* by the devotees who worshipped Durga as a goddess. He did this by giving an introduction to *Chandi Charittar Ukat Bilas* running as follows :–
deh siva bar mohe ehai, subh karan te kabhun na taro
na daro ar so job jee laro, niscai kar apni jit karo
Ar Sikh hau apne hi man kau eh talae hau gun to ukro
jab av kiaud nidhan banai at hi ran mai tab jujh maro
Give me this power O Almighty
from righteous deeds I may never refrain

Fearless may I fight the battles of life
Full confidence may I ever have
In asserting my moral victories
May my supreme ambition and learning be
To sing of thy glory and victory
When this mortal life comes to a close
May I die with the joy and courage of a martyr.

Trilochan Singh rightly observes that by giving this Introduction to what was a translation, Guru Gobind completely dissociated himself from the religious views of the writers of *Markandya Puran* and thereby also distinguished himself from the worshippers of Durga. Translation by Trilochan Singh, 'The History and Compilation of the Dasam Granth. II' *Sikh Review*, May 1955, 51.

42. Durga Shapt Shati literally means seven hundred verses describing the exploits of Durga. It is the name given to that portion of *Markandya Puran* where Durga and her battles have been described in detail.

43. Ashta, D.P. *Op. Cit.*, 53.

44. Randhir Singh, *Op. Cit.*, 29

45. Trilochan Singh 'The History and Compilation of the Dasam Granth. Part II' *Sikh Review*, May 1955, 38.

46. Ashta, D. P., *Op. Cit.*, 66.

47. *Krishan Avatar*, Chaupai 4
Je Je Krishan Charitar dikhaye
'Dasam' beech sabh bakhai sunai
Gyara sahas chiasi chanda
kahe 'dasam' pur beth Ananda

as given in 'Khas dastkhati Paudian' seen by Randhir Singh at Patna. See Randhir Singh, *Shabd Murit*, 21.

In the printed version of Dasam Granth, the number of couplets written at Anandpur is given as 1192.

Je Je Krishan Chariter dikhaye
Dasam beech sabh bhaki sunai
Gyara sahas banve chanda
Kahe dasam pur baith Ananda.

See. *Tatkra Sri Dasamguru Granth Sahib Ji Ka Likhya* (n.d.n.p.) 254.

48. *Krishan Avatar* is divided into five parts. The first part deals with Krishan's childhood, the second about his stay in Kunj Gali, the third tells us about his departure to Mathura, the fourth describes his battles and the last one gives some domestic details. For the exact number of verses in each part see, Ashta, D.P. *Op. Cit.*, 66–67.

49. The five Sikhs sent to Banaras returned after staying there for seven years (according to Khazan Singh after ten years). The names of those 'learned disciples' who later began the 'Nirmala school' of Sikh Philosophy are said to be Ram Singh, Karam Singh, Ganda Singh, Vir Singh and Sobha Singh. Obviously these names were taken after 1699 when they became Khalsas. For biographical details, see Kahan Singh, *Gur Shabad Ratnakar* (Amritsar 1930), iii, 2133, cited by Sher Singh, *Philosophy of Sikhism*, 4.

50. The marriage took place on 15 May 1685. Randhir Singh, *Sikh Itihas de Partakh Darshan*, 86.

51. Medni Parkash succeeded Budh Parkash in 1684. We could not determine the exact month but the succession seems to have taken place in the second half of 1685. *Sirmur State Gazetteer*, 10.

52. The great majority of the Sikhs in Guru's township in Bilaspur State left for Nahan with Guru Gobind and Kripal but a few seems to have remained behind. There is a strong Sikh tradition about Gulab Rai and Sham Das, the grandsons of Suraj Mal, being left by the 'Guru' at Anandpur-Makhowal deliberately. May be they were asked by Kripal to keep on staying at these places to look after the Sikhs who did not accompany the Guru to Nahan. See, Gyan Singh, *Shri Dashmesh Chamatkar*, 119.

53. Khazan Singh, *Op. Cit*, 162.

IV

1. Ross, D. *The Land of Five Rivers and Sind : Historical and Descriptive Sketches*, 215; Douie, J. *The Punjab, North-West Frontier Provinces and Kashmir*, 285.

2. The Kangra and the Simla Hill States had been forced to recognize the suzerainty of the Mughals during the reign of Akbar but had persistently rebelled against it. They did so even though Akbar kept the younger sons of the Hill Rajas in his court as hostages. In the reign of Jahangir, when the Mughals had captured the Kangra fort, they began keeping a strong Mughal contingent under a *faujdar* in that fort. One of the chief duties of the *faujdar* was to collect the annual tribute to be sent to Delhi regularly and thus the Mughal suzerainty began to be exercised effectively.

3. Bernier who passed through the Punjab in 1665 and published his *Travels in Mughal Empire* in 1669 described Prithvi Shah as an independent ruler. *Dehra Dun Gazetteer* 171; Saxena, B. P. *History of Shah Jahan of Delhi*, xxxi; Bernier, *Travels in the Mughal Empire* : 1656–1668 (edited Archibald constable n.d.), i–iv.

4. Raja of Sirmur from 1630 to 1645. *Sirmur Gatteer*, 10–12.

5. Hatchison, J. and Vogel, J. Ph. *History of the Punjab Hill States*, I, 203–204.

6. *Sirmur State Gazetteer*, 12.

7. The territory gained by the Sirmur Raja included Shergarh, Kalsi and the fort of Bairat. *Loc.cit.*

8. The faujdar of Kangra, Iraj Khan, was ordered to make arrangements for the campaign and khalil-ulah-khan was appointed the commander by a *firman* dated 24 Muharram 1065 (1654–55) *Sirmur State Gazetteer*, 12,

9. *Loc.cit.*

10. Mandhatta died in 1654 and the campaign began in the same year. The campaign is described in details in *Shah Jahan Nama*. E. 11. I, vii, 106–110 cited in *Sirmur State Gazetteer*, 13

11. *Ibid*, 13.

12. *Ibid*, 14.

13. *Loc.cit*.

14. Sarkar, J. N. *History of Aurangzib*, II, 357–359; *Sirmur State Gazetteer*, 13–14.

15. *Dehra Dun Gazetteer*, 171.

16. Sirmur State Gazetteer suggests that Aurangzib gave the title of *Qudwat-ul-Ismal* to the Nahan ruler and that of *Zabdat-ul-Ismal* to Rup Singh to indicate that he ranked the former higher than the latter. But literally there ts not much of a difference between *qudwat* (exempler) and *zabdat* (essence) and the titles might have indicated equality between the two receipents of the respective titles, *Sirmur State Gazetteer*, 14 f.n.

17. *Ibid*.

18. Early in 1658, Sulaiman Shukoh won a victory over Shuja in Bengal but was asked by his father to desist from pursuing his defeated uncle and come to the Punjab to help him there. His plan of making a wide loop round Delhi to march through the northern side of Ganges to the Punjab was thwarted near Hardwar by Aurangzib's forces. He now entered Garhwal in the hope that Prithvi Shah, the then ruler of Garhwal, would allow him to pass through his territory to the Punjab Hills wherefrom he would proceed to his father. The Garhwal Raja encouraged him to enter his territory but did not allow him to pass on to join his father. Sulaiman remained in Garhwal state for a year and a half and was treated very well by Prithvi Shah. On 2nd December 1660, however, he was handed over to Aurangzib by the heir apparent to Garhwal *gaddi*. Sulaiman Shah died as Aurangzib's prisoner in May 1662, Sarkar J. N. *Op. Cit*, 111, 563–565.

19. *Dehra Dun Gazetteer*, 171,

20. It is interesting to observe Aurangzib directing in 1691 the Nahan ruler to refrain from interfering in Garhwal affairs. Aurangzib's *firman* dated 1100 A. H. (1691) cited in *Sirmur Gazetteer*, 14.

21. Sirmur State Gazetteer, 14; *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 453–455; Goswamy, B. N. *The Social Background of Kangra Valley Paintings*, 58.

22. For Budh Parkash see *Sirmur Gazetteer*, 10 and for Medni Shah Goswami B. N., *Op. Cit*.

23. Lying on the left bank of the Jumna, it was situated mid way between Nahan, the capital of Sirmur and Dehra Dun, then Ram Rai's headquaters and in Garhwal territory. Nahan was twenty miles to its west and Dehra Dun 26 miles to its east. It was surrounded by a mountaneous tract and not easily accessible from the plains of Sarhind. For distance see, Banerjee, I. B. *Evolution of the Khalsa*, II (1961) 71. f. n.; Nijjar, B. S. *Punjab under the Great Mughals*, 109 and f.n. Macauliffe, M.A. *The Sikh Religion*, Chand 1963, V. 17.

24 There is strong Sikh tradition that when Bhim Chand went to Srinagar to marry his son to the daughter of Fateh Chand, he sought Guru's permission to cross through Paonta. The Guru, we are told, allowed the bridegroom and a few attendents to do so but the unusually large number of troops with Bhim Chand had to go through another circuiteous route. This made Bhim Chand so angry that he insisted on Fateh Chand at the time of marriage not only to refuse Guru's presents for his daughter but even lead the attack on Paonta. The extent of anger that the Sikh tradition attributes to Bhim Chand on the Guru not allowing the whole of his retinue to cross through Paonta and suffer on inconvenience by following another route is indicative of the commanding position of Paonta on the route between the two states of Nahan and Garhwal.

25. *Suraj Parkash*, III, Rut 1–Ansu 47, 2339.

26. Sirmur Gazetteer, 112 as cited by Banerjee, I. B. *Evolution of the Khalsa*, II, 69.

27. *Bachittar Natak*, viii, 3.

28. Prithvi Shah and Fateh Shah appear to have considerable faith in the spiritual 'strength' of Ram Rai. This is clearly indicated by Prithvi Shah's settling down Ram Rai at

Khairabad and allowing him to build it as the nucleous of Dehra Dun and Fateh Shah confirming the possession of several villages for the support of 'Mahant's', retinue, besides allowing him to build a small centre at Srinagar itself. *Dehra Dun Gazetteer*, 172.

29. Macauliffe, M.A. *The Sikh Religion*, Chand 1963, V. 17.

30. Guru Gobind and Ram Rai seem to have met at least twice in 1686. The initiative might well have been taken by Guru Gobind. The first meeting took place in Nahan territory and then the Guru visited Ram Rai's headquarters at Dehra Dun. Macauliffe, M. A., *Op.Cit*. V. 17, 20, 21, 22, 23.

31. The Sikh tradition very significantly preserves the memory of both Fateh Shah and Medni Parkash now visiting the the Guru regularly. Sometime they would visit the Guru, we are told, at the same time and accompany the Guru for *shikar* in the jungles around Paonta. *Gurbilas*, 129.

32. Badhu Shah seems to have brought these Pathans to the Guru in the beginning of 1686 and received a letter of appreciation from Guru Gobind. This letter dated 25 February 1686 (Phagun Shudi 1742 Bk), was later acquired by Raja Bharpur Singh of Nabha from the descendants of Budhu Shah. The suggestion that Badhu Shah got this letter for having sent his timely help to the Guru in the battle of Bhangani where two of his sons actually died fighting for the Guru is rather far fetched. The battle of Bhangani took place in 1688 and the Guru makes no mention of the 'martyrdon' of the two sons of Budh Shah in *Bachittar Natak*. Kartar Singh, *Life of Guru Gobind Singh*, 85; Teja Singh Ganda Singh, *A History of the Sikhs*, 64, f n. 1; Macauliffe, M. A. *The Sikh Religion*, Chand, 1963, V, 18–20.

33. Literally means string of names of weapon.

34. Ashta, D. P. *The Poetry of the Dasam Granth*, 147.

35. *Ibid*, 149.

36. *Ibid*, 147.

37. *ibid*, 147–48.

38. Randhir Singh, *Shabd Murit*, 24: According to Randhir Singh the *Var* had its effect in inspiring Guru's followers

to later fight the battle of Bhangani with faith and courage to win a great victory.

39. Ashta, D. P. *Op. Cit*, 137.

40. *Ibid*, 130.

41. *Ibid*, 131.

42. Scholars disagree about the year in which Ajit (literally means unconquerable) was born. Following Bhai Santokh Singh, some put it in 1686 (1743 Bk) But others relying on Bute Shah put it a year later in 1687 (1744 Bk). Teja Singh — Ganda Singh have accepted Bhai Santokh Singh. They have given the exact birth day of Ajit Singh as 9 November 1686 (Magh Sudi 4, 1748 Bk) *Suraj Parkash*, 4887; Teja Singh Ganda Singh, *Op. Cit*, 64 f. n. I; Bute Shah, *Tarikh-i-Punjab* (Punjab University MSS) 171 cited by Sunder Singh, *The Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, 11.

43. *Krishan Avatar*, verse 983.

Satra sai chatval me Savan sudi budhwar
Nagar Pauntaˌmai su me rachio granth sudhar

44. Trilochan Singh, 'The History and Compilation of Dasam Granth'. *The Sikh Review* June 1955, 49; *Krishan Avat r*, verse 2490, 2491.

Satra sai paintal me savan sudhi thiti deep
Nagar Paunta Sukh Karan jama bhai sanip 2490
Dasam Katha bhagvat Ki bhaka kari banai
Avar rasna nahi prabh dharam judh ko chai 2491

45. Ashta, D. P. *Op. Cit.*, 78.

46. *Ibid*, 79.

47. *Krishan Avatar*, verse 2491. See f. n. 44 above.

48. *Krishan Avatar* verse 1901.

Jan sab ich karo dhan ki tan chalin dhan desan des te awe
Au sabh ridhan sidhan pe hamro nahi neku hiya lal chave
Aur suno kuoh jog bikhe keh kaun ite tapke tanu tawe
Jujh maro ran me taji bhe tum te prabh sayam ehu bar pawe.

49. *Bachitter Natak*, canto viii, verse 7.

50. *Ibid*, viii, 8.

51. *Ibid*, viii, 11.

52. *Ibid*, viii, 33.

53. Bhai Gian Singh, *Tawarikh-i-Guru Khalsa*, I, 140.

54. *Suraj Parkash*, IV.

55. *Loc. Cit.*

56. Macauliffe, *Op. Cit*, V, 29; *Gur Bilas*, VI, 250–51 cited by Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, (1962 edition), 75.

57. Kartar Singh, *Op. Cit*, 84 f. n.

58. *Bachittar Natak*, viii 7.

59. *Ibid*, viii 15.

60. *Ibid*, viii 20.

61. This is clear from the part played by Hari Chand in the battle of Bhangani. He was hit and lost his consciousness soon after the battle began. When he regained his consciousness, he found his side in disarray and fighting a losing battle but that did not unnerve him. He rallied his side and fought heroically and that encouraged Fateh Shah's men to continue the battle. The Guru's account of Hari Chand's role in the battle gives the impression that with a little luck, he might have won the battle for his side. It wae only when the Guru succeeded in killing him that the battle ended well for Guru Gobind. *Bachittar Natak*, viii. 13, 15, 21, 26, 27, 29, 30, 33, 34.

62. *Ibid*, viii, 23.

63. *Ibid*, viii, 25.

65. *Ibid*, viii, 29, 30, 32; Banerjee, I. B. *Op. Cit*, II, 77.

66. *Bachittar Natak*, viii, 29, 30.

67. *Ibid*, viii, 30.

68. Gyan Singh it obviously wrong when he states that Medni Parkash was apparently neutral but helped the Guru with gunpowder, food etc. If that were so the Guru would not have left Paonta so soon after his victory over Fateh Shah at Bhangani. Gyan Singh, *Tawarikh Guru Khalsa*, 1574.

69. Macauliffe, M. A. *Op. Cit*, V, 47.

70. Gobind's followers, according to Sukha Singh, were so excited after their victory at Bhangani that they advocated wild plans of attacking Srinagar and Delhi. It is highly imporbable that they advocated a march on Delhi but their keenness to cross over to Srinagar is understandable. *Gur Bilas*, 159.

71. Macauliffe, M. A. *Op. Cit*, V, 47.

72. Kartar Singh, *Op. Cit*, 89; Macaulifee calls the place Lakhanpur. Macauliffe, M. A. *Op. Cit*, V. 47.

73. Kartar Singh, *Op. Cit*, 89; Macauliffe does not regard it a village or a town but the name of the Gurudawara at Lakhanpur. Macauliffe, M. A. *Op. Cit*, V, 48.

74. Kartar Singh, *Op. Cit*, 89.

75. Raipur was a seperate state from Rampur.

76. Bhai Vir Singh feels sure of the Guru entering into a regular agreement with Bhim Chand before moving to Anandpur and we agree with him. We do not, however, agree with Vir Singh when he contends that the agreement was signed at Paonta. Bhai Sahib argues on the presumption that it was Bhim Chand who led the hill Rajas in the battle of Bhangani. It is a presumption open to objection on the score that Guru Gobind in his *Bachittar Natak* makes no mention of the Kahlur Raja's participation in the battle of Bhangani. We feel that the formality, if any, of the agreement was effected at Anandpur though a tacit understanding must have been reached through some emissary when Gobind was staying with the Rani of Raipur. *Suraj Parkash*, IV, Rut 2 Ansu 32, 2414 and f. n. on the page by Bhai Vir Singh.

V

1. Hutchison, J. and Vogel, J. Ph. *History of the Punjab Hill States*, I, 388, 462, 502; Banerjee, I.B. *Evolution of the Khalsa*, 11 (Caluctta, 1962), 80 ; *Mandi State Gazetteer*, 37
2. Hutchison and Vogel, *Op, Cit.*, 388
3. *Ibid.*, 149, 150, 225, 226.
4. *Ibid.*, 76, 172, 173 ; *Suraj Parkash*, IV, Rut 2–Ansu 39 & 40, 2430–2435.
5. Hutchsion and Vogel, *Op. Cit*, 205, 309.
6. *Journal of Indian History*, xxxi, ii, 140. 142; cited by Goswamy B. N. *Social Background of Kangra Valley Painting*,
7. *Bachittar Natak*, viii, 38.
8. *Ibid.* 37.
9. Guru Gobind Singh built up four forts and named them Anandpur, Keshgrah, Fatehgarh, and Lohgarh
10. *Bachittar Natak*, ix, 2.
11. *Ibid.* 1.
12. *Ibid.* 2.
13. Nijjar, B. S. *Panjab under the Great Mughals*.
14. *Bachittar Natak*, viii, 3.
15. Banerjee I. B. *Op. Cit*, II, 75 f. n. ; *Gur Bilas*, 156; *Panth Parkash*, XXXIII, 16 ; Hutchison and Vogel, *Op. Cit*, I, 205.
16. Following *Gur Bilas*, Indu Bhushan Banerjee rightly calls him the Raja of Jaswan. This gets confirmation from the name Ram Singh appearing in the list of the Rajas of Jaswan given by Hutchison and Vogel. See Banerjee, I. B. *Op. Cit*, II, f. n. 1 on page 81 ; and Appendix A.

17. Banerjee calls him the chief of Madhawar, a hill state in the Jammu group. We feel that he was more likely to be the chief of Datarpur. The later chiefs of the state bore the title of Dhadwal. Hutchison and Vogel, *Op. Cit*, I, 212; Banerjee, I. B. *Op*. *Cit*, II, 80.

18. *Bachittar Natak*, ix, 3.

19. *Ibid*, ix, 2; Saina Pat, *Gur Sobha*, 15.

20. *Bachittat Natak*, ix, 2

21. *Ibid*. 5

22. *Ibid*. 6

23. *Ibid*. 17

24. *Ibid*. 16

25. *Ibid* 16

26. *Ibid*. 18

27. *Ibid*. 22

28. *Ibid*. 23

29. *Ibid*. 24

30. Jujhar was born on 20 March 1690 (7 chet 1747). He was born to Jito, the first wife of Guru Gobind, soon after the battle of Nadaun. Guru chose to name him Jujhar Singh which means a fighter. We may note here in passing that *Suraj Parkash*, *Gur Bilas* and following them Macauliffe says that the name given to the second son was Zorawar Singh. But all other authorities, including Saina Pat in Gur Sobha, say that the name of the second son was Jujhar Singh and it was the third son who was Zorawar Singh. See Macauliffe, M. A. *Op*. *Cit*, V, 55; Kartar Lingh, Life of *Guru Gobind Singh*, 188; Lachman Singh, *A Short Sketch of the Life and work of Guru Gobind Singh*, 83.

31. It is significant that Gobind writes in the *Bachittar Natak* that in this period, he was required to punish the thiefs and decoits who had invested Anandpur-Makhowal in great numbers. Equally significant is his reference to people

leaving Anandpur and coming back again to live under his shelter. *Bachittar Natak*, x, 1.

32. Ashta, D.P. *The Poetry of Dasam Granth*, 156, 224, 225.

33. *Ibid*, 152. These tales (404 in all) were later collected in all probablity by Bhai Mani Singh to constitute the *Pakhyan Charittar* in the *Dasam Granth*. That these tales were composed during this period would be clear from the date given in the last quatrain of tale no : 405 in *Pakhyan Charittar*, (one of the tales is missing and hence the last one has this number though the actual number of tales included in the *Charittar* is 404). It was composed, according to the quatrain, on Bhadon Shudi Ashtami i. e. September 1693. *Pakhyan Charittar*, 405.

34. Ashta. *Op. Cit*, 151.

35. *Ibid*, 156, 225.

36. *Ibid*, 153.

37. *Ibid*, 155.

38. *Ibid*, 151.

39. Randhir Singh, *Shabd Murit*, 25.

40. See Chapter III.

41. Ashta, *Op. Cit.*, 41.

42. Guru Gobind used the following twelve metres in *Akal Ustat*: *Swaiya*, *Kabitta*, *Chaupai*, *Totak*, *Tomar*, *Dirgah Tribhangi*, *Dohra*, *Naraj*. *Padhari*, *Bhujang Prayat*, *Raumal* and *Laghu Naraj*.

43. Ashta, *Op. Cit.*, 39.

44. *Akal Ustat*, verse 69.

45. *Akal Ustat* can be divided into six parts. In the first part, there is invocation to God who is looked upon as Timeless, Omnipresent, Omnipotent, All-steel and Supreme Nature. The second part dwells on the vanity of worldly pomp, power, valour and pilgrimages; and on rituals, charities, yoga and idol worship. The third part is a satire on the various penances and austerities then practiced by various sects in India. The fourth part deals with the popular

theological queries on the spiritual aspects of life and philosophy of Hindu *shastras*. The fifth part sings the praises of Chandi. The last part is a hymn to God in all His splendour.

46. Ashta, *Op. Cit*, 37.

47, *Ibid*, 38–39.

48. *Ibid*, 40.

49. *Akhbarat-i-Darbar-i-Mualla* (R. A. S.), I, 1677–1699. An extract of a news letter dated 20 November 1693 in the *Akhbarat* runs as follows : 'News from Sarhind—Gobind declares himself to be Guru Nanak. Faujdars ordered to prevent him from assembling (his Sikhs)' see Teja Singh Ganda Singh. *A Short History of the Sikhs*, I, 65 f. n. 2

50. Narang, G. C. calls him the 'Governor of Kangra'; see *Transformation of Sikhism* (2nd edition, 1945), 154.

51. *Bachittar Natak*, x, 10.

52. The Guru was informed of Khanzada's movement by one Alam Singh when he began crossing river Sutlej. Banerjee, I. B. describes Alam Singh as 'an attendant' of the Guru. Sunder Singh says he was Guru's *deoridhar*, Banerjee, I. B. *Op.Cit*, II, 85 ; Sunder Singh, *The Battles of Guru Gobind Singh*, 16.

53 *Bachittar Natak*. x, 4–6.

54. On his way to Nadaun, Khanzada plundered Barwa and stayed for some time at Bhalan to give his troops a little rest, *Ibid*, x, 9

55. Hussain Khan is usually described as a 'trusted slave' of Dilawar Khan but Guru Gobind Singh does not describe him that way in the *Bachittar Natak*. Actually, the Guru introduces him in canto xi of the Natak in a manner as to suggest that he was a regular commander of Dilawar Khan's forces; see, *Bachittar Natak*, xi, 2.

56. To our mind Hussain really got busy in collecting this levy with a view to finance his attack on Anandpur. That is the only way in which we can interpret Hussain getting bogged down in campaigning against the hill Rajas and not dashing straight to Anandpur. Hussain's activities against the Hill

Rajas are generally accepted as the chief cause of Hussain's failure to reach Anandpur but why he behaved that way after confidently boasting to his master that he would soon crush Guru Gobind has not been satisfactorily explained either by Sikh records or later day biographers of Guru Gobind Singh.

57. Banerjee, I. B. *Op. Cit.*, 86.

58. *Bachittar Natak*, xi, 7, 8, 9, 11.

59. According to Guru Gobind Singh, Hussain demanded from the Guler Raja the amount of Rs. 10,000 as a war levy. The amount must have looked extremely exhorbitant to the Raja even if he was expected to share the burden with his friend, the Raja of Jaswan. The two must have compared it with the annual tribute that they paid to the Mughal Government which did not exceed a few hundred rupees for either Guler or Jaswan. For the amount demanded see *Bachittar Natak*, xi, 13, and the annual tribute paid by the Hill Rajas to the Mughal Government, see Goswami, B N. *Op.Cit*, 57–58.

60. Banerjee, I.B. *Op.Cit*, II, 86.

61. *Bachittar Natak*, xi, 30.

62. *Ibid*, xi, 48.

63. *Loc. Cit.*

64. *Bachittar Natak*, xi, 33.

65. *Ibid*. xi, 31.

66. *Ibid*. xi, 32.

67. *Ibid*. xi, 56.

68. *Ibid*. xi, 59.

69. *Ibid*. xi, 65.

70. *Ibid*. xi, 66.

71. That Sangtia was sent by Guru Gobind to Guler as has been asserted by Sikh records might be readily granted. It is, however, difficult to believe that he was sent to negotiate or or that he really negotiated between Jaswan Raja and Hussain

through Kripal Chand of Kangra and Bhim Chand, the Kahlur Raja. If Sangtia accompanied Raj Singh (Gopal) to the two Hill Rajas on Hussain's side it must have been to prevail upon the latter not to support Hussain in his activities against the two hill Rajas and attack on Guru's head-quarters at Anandpur. It is obvious [that Sangtia failed in the attempt and died fighting with the seven men who came with him. *Bachittar Natak*, xi, 57.

72. *Ibid*, xi, 69.

73. Banerjee, I. B. *Op. Cit*, II, 86.

74. *Bachittar Natak*, xiii, 1–12.

75. Muazzam was for some years out of favour with his father, Aurangzib, and was kept in captivity for seven years in the Deccan before being released in 1694. Soon after, he was ordered to go to Agra to punish the rebels there. He moved to the north in the second quarter of 1695. He remained at Agra till July 1696 when he was made the viceroy of Lahore, Kabul and Kashmir. He came to Lahore and stayed there for some time. *Maasir-i-Alamgiri* in Elliot and Dowson, *The History of India as told by its own Historians* (Allahabad 1964), 190–191; Khafi Khan; *Mutkhib-ul-Lubab* in Elliot and Dowson, *Op. Cit*, 358–359; Irvine, *Later Mughals* (ed Jadunath Sarkar, Calcutta n. d.), 3–4.

76. Muazzam came to Lahore in August 1696 and from there directed operation against the Hill Rajas. We owe the date of his arrival at Lahore to Khafi Khan and the fact of his directing operation against the Hill Rajas to Guru Gobind Singh himself. Khafi Khan in Elliot and Dowson, *Op. Cit*, 153 and correction in Shahpurshah Hormas ji Hodivala, *Studies in Muslim Indian History*, 662; *Bachittar Natak*, xiii, 1–5.

77. *Bachittar Natak*, xiii, 5–9; G. C. Narang, *Transformation of Sikhism* (1945 ed), 156. Though the Guru was left unharmed, he passed through very anxious days in August 1696 when Muazzam came to Lahore. This is clear from his sending a *hukamnama* dated 2 August 1696 (2 Bhadon Sambat 1753 Bk) to Bhais Triloka, Rama and the entire congregation under them to come to him with a force. For

an English translation of this *hukamnama*, see Ganda Singh, *Patiala and East Punjab : Historical Background*, 44.

78. It was during this period that Guru Gobind wrote *Vishnu de Chaubis Avatar*, *Brahma Avatar* and *Uppa Avatar*. In these writings; he critically examined the *Avatars* of all the three Gods of Hindu mythology : Vishnu, Shiv and Rudra. Randhir Singh, *Shabd Murit*.

79. Some of the new poets who joined Guru Gobind Singh's *darbar* in this period were Mangal, Keshav Dass. Amrit Rai and Sadama. Mahip Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh. Ek Yug Vyaktiv*, 138–147.

80. Khazan Singh puts the return of the 'five Sikhs' from Banaras in 1695. That would make the stay of the founders of Nirmala school of Sikh philosophy (five Sikhs) at Banaras at ten years. The generally accepted period of their stay at Banaras is however, seven years. If we accept the latter period then they must have returned to Anandpur in 1692.

81. We notice some of the most talented poets in Guru Gobind's *darbar* now beginning to translate portions of *Mahabharat*. For example. Hans Ram began translating *Karan purav*, Amrit Rai *Sabha-purav*. Mangal *Shalya-purav* and Kurresh *Daro-purav*. It is difficult to say that something similar was done about *Ramayan* but in all probablity some poets did begin the translations of *Ramayan* in this period. See Bhai Vir Singh's tract, *Guru Gobind Singh da Vidya Darbar*.

82. The word 'Natak' has been used by Guru as synonymous with the term Lila, the wonderful performance and not in its widely accepted sense viz. drama, a form of literature. Ashta had rightly pointed out that this is evident from the use of the word Natak by the Guru in his autobiography itself. *Bachittar Natak*, v, 15; Ashta, D. P. *Op. Cit*, 42.

83. *Bachittar Natak Granth* of which *Bachittar Natak* (autobiography) is only part, includes *Vishnu de Chaubis Avatar*, *Brahma Avatar*, *Uppa Avatar* and *Chandi Charittar* I & II. This is suggested by the concluding endorsement made by the author in almost all these compositions. It runs as follows :

Iti Sri Bachittar Natak Granthe . . . . . . Samaptamshe; see, Ashta, *Op. Cit*. 41; Trilochan Singh, 'The History and Compilation of Dasam Granth — Part III' *Sikh Review*, June 1955, 45–47.

84. Guru Gobind wrote *Chandi Charittar* II after he had finished writing the *Bachittar Natak*. He, in fact, hinted in his 'autobiography' that now that he had finished writing his own *Lila & Natak*, he would proceed to write about Chandi once again.

85. The third son, Zorawar Singh (according to some Jujhar Singh) was born to Jito on the first day of the second half of the month of Magh Sambat 1753 i.e. 14 January 1697. Macauliffe, *Op.Cit*, V, 55.

86. Guru's fourth son, Fateh Singh, was born on 11 Phagun 1755 which would be 22 February 1699. *Ibid*, V, 60.

VI

1. See, Appendix C for the problems which the institution of the Khalsa poses for the student of history.

2. The significance of Guru Gobind Singh's literary activity has been noted by many a writer, but its relevance for the institution of the Khalsa has not yet been fully explored. See, for instance.- Cunningham, J. D. *A History of the Sikhs*, S. Chand & Co., 1966, 61; Archer, J. C. *The Sikhs*, Princeton University Press, 1946, 205; Banerjee, Indubhushan, *Evolution of the Khalsa*, Calcutta, 1947, II, 92–97; Ashta, D. P, *The Poetry of the Dasam Granth*, New Delhi, 1959, 57–58.

3. Macauliffe, M. A. *The Sikh Religion*, Oxford, 1909, V, 296–97.

4. *The Sikh Religion*, V, 314–15.

5, *Ibid.*, 310.

6. *Loc.cit.*

7. Kushwant Singh's translation.

8. Kapur Singh, *Parasharprasna or the Baisakhi of Guru Gobind Singh*, Jullundur, 1959, 441–42.

9. *Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Steek*, ed. Gyani Bishan Singh, Khalsa College, Amritsar, II, 329.

10. *Ibid.* (*Bachittar Natak*), I, 160.

11. Ashta, D. P. *The Poetry of the Dasam Granth*, 57–58.

12. J. C. Archer briefly notes (*The Sikhs*, 205) that Guru Gobind Singh 'had been very much impressed as he studied Hindu scriptures with the role of Rama and Krishna, especially, and may have realized that they were once mere men who played their part at a time of special need'. They were extraordinary human beings for Guru Gobind Singh, but they were nonetheless mortal like all other *Avatars*. Cf. Ashta *The Poetry of the Dasam Granth*, 73–74.

13. Dr. Sher Singh suggests (*Philosophy of Sikhism*, Lahore, 1944, 177) that the martial attributes of God were the outcome of Guru Gobind Singh's need for military and war, but he also adds that when other means fail 'God makes use of this power and the best symbol of his power is the sword's. *Sword and other military weapons symbolise divine power in Guru Gobind Singh's writings.* This can be, and has been, demonstrated from Guru Gobind Singh's writings.

14, Bedi, Kala Singh (ed.) *Var Sri Bhagauti Ji Ki*, New Delhi, 1966, 104–05.

15. *Loc. cit.*; Cf. *The Sikh Religion*, V, 82.

16. Some very apt passages are quoted by Randhir Singh in the *habad Murit* in the beginning.

17. *The Sikh Religion*, V, 294–95.

18. *Ibid.*, 300–01.

19. *Ibid.*, 299–300.

20. *Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Steek* (*Bachittar Natak*), 1, 238–39.

21. *Ibid.*, I, 206, 233.

22. *Ibid.*, I, 238, 43.

23. *Ibid.*, I, 238–39.

24. *The Sikh Religion*, V, 23, 84–87, 106; Kesar Singh Chhibber, *Bansavalinama*, SHR 103, 109; he also correctly mentions that *hukamnamas* were sent to the *sangats* against the *masands*.

25. *The Sikh Religion*, V, 322–23; Cf. Ashta, *The Poetry of the Dasam Granth*, 145, & n, 4.

26. Randhir Singh, in his Introduction to the *Prem Sumarag* (2nd. ed.) has given the *facsimile* (opposite, 7) of a *hukamnama* of Guru Hargobind in which it is explicitly stated that the *sangat* of 'the east' was the Guru's *khalsa*. In a *hukamnama* of Guru Tegh Bahadur (*Ibid., facsimile*, opposite, 8) also the *sangat* of Patan is regarded as the Guru's *khalsa*. Randhir Singh's suggestion that there were two categories of Sikhs — those who were directly connected with the Gurus and those who were connected with them

through the *masands* — appears to be a valid inference from the available evidence, He gives a *hukamnama* of Guru Gobind Singh also (*Ibid*., 17) in which the *sangat* of Machhiwara is called the *khalsa* of the Guru even before the Baisakhi of 1699.

27. Saina Pat, *Sri Gur Sobha*, Nanak Singh Kripal Singh, Amritsar, 457 Nanak Shahi, 19–38.

28. Khalsa College, Amritsar, SHR 35, Nos: 4 & 6; SHR 42, Nos: 2,3,4; SHR 43, No. 5.

29. *Sri Gur Sobha*, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 27, 38. In a news-letter in the *Akhbarat-i-Darbar-Mualla* (Jaipur), Khalsa College, Amritsar, SHR 530, b (given under the wrong date of the 5th year of Farrukh Siyar's reign instead of Bahadur Shah's), the removal of the *masands* is mentioned as a most important measure of Guru Gobind Singh. See also, Randhir Singh's introduction to the *Prem sumarag*, Jullundur, 1965.

30. *Sri Gur Sobha*, 18.

31. Ahmad Shah of Batala (*Tarikh-i-Hind*, SHR 1291, 376) and Ghulam Muhiyuddin (*Tarikh-i-Punjab*, SHR 1288, 408) specifically mention twenty thousand persons accepting the new order, and in some of the modern works the number given is eighty thousand. These computations appear to be no more than mere guesses. But, it may be safely assumed that the number of persons present at Anandpur at this time ran into thousands and it was larger than the usual gatherings on Baisakhi days.

32. Cf. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, *A Short History of the Sikhs*, Orient Longmans Ltd., 1950, 68; Banerjee, *Evolution of the* Khalsa (2nd ed.), II, 113. It may be pointed out that Banerjee has argued convincingly (*Ibid*., 97–108) that the whole episode of the worship of Durga by Guru Gobind Singh was a later invention.

33. For instance, Bhai Gurdas's statement, 'where there are five Sikhs, there is God'.

34. Some information about the 'Five-Beloved' is collected by Dr. Ganda Singh in the *Makhiz-i-Tawarikh-i-Sikhan*, 8.

35. The early accounts of how the *pahul* was prepared and administered vary in detail, but the use of the *kahnda* is common to all. See, for example, *Sri Gur Sobha*, 22; Koer

Singh 'Kalal', *Gur Bilas Patshahi Das*, quoted by Randhir Singh, *Prem Sumarag* (2nd. ed.), Introduction, 20–21, 41; Kesar Singh Chhibber in his *Bansavalinama* gives a different version (SHR 103, 105). See also Randhir Singh, *Ibid*, 20–48. For "How a Sikh is knighted a Singh" these days, see Kapur Singh, *Parasharprasna*, Appendix I, 52–83.

36. For translations of the relevant portions of Guru Gobind Singh's compositions, see, *The Sikh Religion*, V, 261–63. 306–10. Guru Gobind Singh's interest in the *Puranas*, *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, and the translations or adaptations from the vast literature done either by him or under his supervision, need not mislead one to think that he was compromising his monotheistic faith; his literary activity and patronage may be seen as an attempt at pressing the Hindu tradition into the service of Sikhism.

37. *The Sikh Religion*, V, 314–15.

38. For example, Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khalsa* (2nd ed.), II, 114, 116, 117, 122.

39. See, Randhir Singh, *Prem Sumarag*, (2nd. ed.), Introduction, 11–14.

40. For example, *Sri Dasam Granth Sahib Steek* (*Bachittar Natak*), I. 221, where 'Singh' is used for Sangtia.

41. See, for instance, Khalsa College, Amritsar, *SHR* 35, No. 4; SHR 43, No. 5.

42. Kapur Singh, *Parasharprasna*, 282.

43. *The Sikh Religion*, V, 312. In Macauliffe's translation, 'I am the son of a brave man, not of a Brahman', a brave man is the translation of the original *chhatri*.

44, *Seir Mutaqherin*, Calcutta, 1902, I, 82. See also Khushwaqt Rai, *Tawarikh-i-Sikhan*. SHR 116, 31; Ghulam Muhiyuddin, *Tarikh-i-Punjab*, SHR 1288, 405.

45. *Sri Gur Sobha*. 6, 20, 21, 22, 28.

46. Kapur Singh, *Parasharprasna*. 8, 85.

47. Saina Pat uses the term *rehat* in the *Gur Sobha*, but it is not clear if he refers to any written code of conduct. Kesar Singh Chhibber, writing in the third quarter of the eighteenth

century, mentions that a *rehatnama* had been composed by Bhai Chaupa Singh during the life time of Guru Gobind Singh, and also that copies of this *rehatnama* were made and they were approved by Guru Gobind Singh. That a written code of conduct was needed after the Baisakhi of 1699 is highly probable. We have not been able to consult any genuine *rehatnama* of Chaupa Singh. The one which is at Khalsa College, Amritsar (SHR 227), certainly contains later interpolations, if it is based on the original at all. The small printed tracts which are attributed to Daya Singh. Nand Lal, Prahlad Singh. Desa Singh, and Chaupa Singh are regarded as spurious (Randhir Singh, *Prem Sumarag*, 78,79).

The *rehat* which is mentioned by Saina Pat, directly or by implication, consists of a few but important points: the *khalsa* of Guru Gobind Singh must take *pahul*, wear their *keshas* and arms; they must not associate with the *masands* and their followers; they must not perform the ceremony of *bhaddan*; they must not associate with those who did not wear their *keshas*; and they must not smoke. Saina Pat assumes and asserts that the foremost duty of the Khalsa was to worship One True Lord in association with the Khalsa *sangats*.

Kesar Singh Chhibber refers to a few other things: the Sikhs of the Guru should love one another, they should enter into matrimonial relationship with the Sikhs alone and without any regard of caste; they should not be afraid of (identifying their own faith amidst) Hinduism or Islam; they should not wear *dhoti*, *janju* and *tikka*; they should not associate themselves with the un-Sikh. More important than all these was to wear arms and to conduct one's practices and belief in accordance with the *Granth* (*Bansavalinama*, SHR 103, 114). At the time of taking the *pahul* the Sikhs were to say, 'Wahguru ji ka Khalsa, Wahguru ji ki Fateh' (quoted, Randhir Singh, *Prem Sumarag*, Introduction, 41).

Randhir Singh states (*Prem Sumarag*, Introduction, 45) that in the early literary evidence, though there are numerous references to 'five-weapons', there is no reference to the 'Five–K's'.

48. *Sri Gur Sobha*, 39.

49. *Ibid.*, 39.

50. *Ibid.*, 29.

51. For instance, Ghulam Muhiyuddin, *Tarikh-i-Punjab*, SHR 1288, 406.

52. *Sri Gur Sobha*, 37. In the *Akhbarat-i-darbar-i-Mualla* (note 29, above) there is a significant statement that acute dissensions arose among the Khatris and resulted in broken betrothals and social ties. In the village Chak Guru (Amritsar) in the *parganah* of Patti arose an armed conflict in which the Khalsa-Sikhs proved to be overpowering.

53. From *Sri Gur Sobha* and the *hukamnamas* of Guru Gobind Singh, it appears that a few *masands* of known integrity were not removed and the new baptism was not forced on anyone by Guru Gobind Singh himself. As already pointed out, many of his *khalsa* were still not 'Singhs'. The newly baptised Sikhs were enthusiastic enough to persuade the other Sikhs to accept the *pahul*.

54. Trilochan Singh (& others), *The Sacred Writings of the Sikhs*, London, 1960, 272; see also, Ashta, *The Poetry of the Dasam Granth*, 146; and Trilochan Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh* (A brief life sketch), Delhi, 1964, 20–21.

55. Hazara Singh, *Varan Bhai Gurdas*, Amritsar, 1962, 662–71; Khushwaqt Rai, *Tawarikh-i-Sikhan*, SHR 116,31; Ahmad Shah, *Tarikh-i-Hind*, SHR 1291, 379; Ganesh Das, *Tawarikh-i-Chahar Gulshan-i-Punjab*, SHR 1274, 156; Sohan Lal, *Udmat-ut-Tawarikh*, Lahore, 1885, 408; Ghulam Mu yuddin, *Tarikh-i-Punjab*, SHR 1288, 408; Aliuddin, *Ibratnam*, SHR 1277, 202.

56. *Sri Gur Sobha*, 39; *passim*.

57. *Ibid.*, 24.

58. *Ibid.*, 29.

59. *Ibid.*, 39.

60. *Ibid.*, 29, 31.

VII

1. Sharma, Sri Ram *The Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors*, Asia Publishing House, 1962 (2nd. ed.), 146, n79.
2. *Ruqat-i-Alamgiri*, Rizzaqi Press, Kanpur, A. H. 1319 (5th. ed.), No. 163.
3. In the later chronicles, only a general statement is made that the *faujdar* of Sarhind was asked to deal with Guru Gobind Singh. What is emphasised in these statements is that Gobind Singh was to be deprived of his hearth and home if he did not desist from military activity. See, for instance, Muhammad Qasim Lahori, *Ibratnama*, SHR 1270, 19–21.
4. Khalsa College, Amritsar, SHR 42, Nos : 2 & 3.
5. SHR 35, No. 6 ; SHR 42, No. 4 ; SHR 43, No. 5 ; SHR 35, No. 4.
6. *Loc. cit.*; see also, Randhir Singh, *Prem Sumarag* (2nd. ed.), 17.
7. The later chroniclers insist upon attributing political motives to Guru Gobind and it is not improbable that the contemporary Hill Chiefs also attributed political ambition to him. Sohan Lal Suri appears to hit the mark when he states that the neighbouring Hill Chiefs, the Chief of Bilaspur in particular, looked upon the activities of Guru Gobind Singh as dangerously political. To them. he appeared to be full of ambition for conquest and dominion—*mulkgiri wa jahandari* (*Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*, Lahore, 1885, I, 62).
8. *Sri Gur Sobha*, 41.
9. See, the map depicting the states and principalities of the Punjab hills during the late 17th century. It is significant that Saina Pat specifically mentions the Chief of Hindur in this connection.
10. *Sri Gur Sobha*, 45 ; cf. Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khalsa* (2nd. ed.), II, 128.

11. Saina Pat uses the terms 'Turks' and 'the Sultan' in his reference to the Mughal authorities; and, from our general knowledge of the administrative set up. it appears that any of the alternatives mentioned here could be there.

12. *Sri Gur Sobha*, 47.

13. SHR 42, No. 4; SHR 43, No. 5; SHR 35, No. 4.

14. *Sri Gur Sobha*, 48; cf. Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khalsa* (2nd. ed.), II, 129.

15. These people appear to have approached Bhim Chand, and the Gujjars who are mentioned by Saina Pat to be in Bhim Chand's train could easily be the inhabitants of these villages.

16. Saina Pat mentions the use of cannon in the battle of Nirmoh. Though he is not dependable for this kind of detail, it is significant that he does not make any mention of the use of cannon in the earlier battles. The use of cannon by the Mughal troops is not improbable.

17. Cf. Banerjee, *Evolution of Khalsa* (2nd. ed.), II, 129.

18. *Sri Gur Sobha*, 55.

19. *Loc. cit.*

20. From the construction of fortresses and the use of a kettle-drum (the 'Ranjit Nagara') by Guru Gobind Singh, it has been infered by Harbans Singh that Anandpur was 'developing the attributes of an autonomous state, (*The Sikh Review*, April, 1958, 24). This view of the situation is a little anachronistic, but it may be of some significance that the Persian chroniclers also begin to notice Guru Gobind Singh's power at this stage of his career.

21. The Sikh tradition presents the Chief of Kahlur himself going to the Emperor in the south and underlining the political ambition of Guru Gobind Singh and his designs against the Mughal Government (*The Sikh Religion*, V, 165–66). According to Gyan Singh, some other Hill Chiefs also had accompanied the Chief of Kahlur to the south (*Tawarikh-i-Guru Khalsa*, I, 171). Ahmad Shah states they saw the Emperor himself (*Tarikh-i-Hind*, SHR 1291, 83). Cf. Aliuddin, *Ibratnama*, SHR 1277, 203; Khushwaqt Rai, *Tawarikh-i-Sikhan*, SHR 116, 32; Mirza Muhammad Harisi,

Ibratnama, SHR 231, 66–67. Even if the Chief of Kahlur did not personally go to the Deccan, this evidence may be interpreted as a reflection of the earnestness of the representation now made by the Hill Chiefs.

22. Whether or not a direct representation was made to the Emperor, it is fairly certain that the Emperor had sent orders to some of the Mughal officials, notably to Wazir Khan. the *faujdar* of Sarhind. Cf. Mirza Muhammad Harisi, *Ibratnama*, SHR 231, 66–67; Budh Singh, *Risalah*, SHR 433, 5; Ahmad Shah. *Tarikh-i-Hind*. SHR 1291, 383; *Ibratnama*, SHR 1277, 203; Khushwaqt Rai *Tawarikh-i-Sikhan*, SHR 116, 32; Ganesh Das, *Tawarikh-i-Chahar Gulshan-i-Punjab*, SHR 1274. 54; Muhammad Shafi Warid, *Tarikh-i-Chaghtai*. SHR 553, 158; Yahiya Khan, *Tazkirat-ul-Muluk*, SHR 1287, 31–32; Muhammad Qasim Lahori *Ibratnama*, SHR 1270, 19–21.

23. Saina Pat in his *Sur Gobha* gives a fairly long account of all these incidents and is closely followed by Indubhushan Banerjee in his *Evolution of the Khalsa*.

24. The Sikh tradition, which refers to these promises. can be traced back to the *Zafarnama* of Guru Gobind Singh in which he deplores the broken promises of the Mughal officials. Saina Pat also underlines this. There is nothing improbable in the besiegers' attempt to lure out the besieged by giving them all sorts of false promises or even by forging false documents to gain their objective.

25. For some detail. see, Ganda Singh. 'The Boy Martyrs of Sirhind', *The Sikh Review*, Dec., 1957, 39–41. It is generally believed that the Chief of Malerkotla had tried to intercede on behalf of Gobind Singh's sons. A letter of Sher Muhammad Khan of Malerkotla to Aurangib, in which a strong sentiment is expressed against the intended execution of the boys, is sometimes cited as a dependable evidence. See, for instance, *The Sikh Review*, Dec., 1958, 13–15 and Ranbir Singh, *Glimpses of the Divine Masters*, New Delhi, 1965, 338–40. This letter makes a plausible reading but it is certainly a later document. (The original may now be seen in the National Archives of India, New Delhi.) However, the tradition itself may not be wholly insignificant. Cf. Budh Singh. *Risalah*, SHR 433. 5–6; Bakht Mal, *Tawarikh-i-Sikhan*, SHR 1659, 16; Khushwaqt Rai, *Tawarikh-i-Sikhan*, SHR 116, 35.

There is also a strong tradition that the boys were bricked alive. W. L. M 'Gregor, who observed that the cruel murder of the boys, has never been forgotten by the Sikhs'' had noticed among them the custom of carrying away a brick from Sarhind (*The History of the Sikhs*, London, 1846, I, 86n) Cf. Sohan Lal Suri, *Umdat-ut-Tawarikh*, I, 58.

26. *Ahkam-i-Alamgiri* (Ganda Singh's *Makhiz*), 74.

27. *Zafarnama* (*ibid.*), 67.

28. *Loc. cit.*

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1. There is a strong tradition that these Afghan brothers had enabled Guru Gobind Singh to escape from the environs of Machhiwara in the garb of a (Suhrawardi) Sufi saint or the *Uchch ka pir*. This tradition is embodied in some of the Persian chronicles also. The descendants of Nabi Khan and Ghani Khan were supposed to be in possession of a *hukamnama* issued by Guru Gobind Singh in acknowledgement of the service rendered to him by the Afghans. A copy of that document is believed to be in the Sikh History Research Library, Khalsa College, Amritsar. A careful look at this copy reveals it to be a later document, giving one version of the tradition.

2. Trilochan Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, 28.

3. The Sikh tradition represents that the Sikhs who had disavowed Guru Gobind Singh at Anandpur during its final siege in 1704 had by now repented and they had come to Muktsar to fight for their Guru.

4. *Sri Gur Sobha*, 77, 78; also, Ahmad Shah, *Tarikh-i-Hind*, SHR 1291, 390.

5. For a brief analysis, Grewal. J. S. 'The *Zafarnama* of Guru Gobind Singh' (to be published by the Guru Gobind Singh Tercentenary Birth Celebrations Committee, Patna).

6. Ganda Singh's *Makhiz*, 74.

7. The initiative for a meeting appears to have been taken by Aurangzib. In the *Zafarnama*, Guru Gobind Singh refers to written and verbal messages received from the Emperor. The news of what was happening around Anandpur had been conveyed to the Emperor regularly and it is highly probable that he decided to call Guru Gobind Singh to the Court. It is generally believed that the aged Emperor's heart had melted over the Guru's sufferings; but this belief, though not entirely untenable, denies any sense of the political realities to Aurangzib. We suggest that the Emperor, now as before, was being guided by his sense of practical

interests to a very considerable extent. Cf. Ahmad Shah, *Tarikh-i-Hind*, 887–88.

8. This is evident from a few of the *hukamnamas* (published in the *Sikh Ithasik Yadgaran* by Randhir Singh) in which the Sikhs are asked to send oxen for the intended journey and to join the Guru if they wished to.

9. For a fuller argument, Grewal, J. S. 'Bahadur Shah and Guru Gobind Singh' (to be published in the *Proceedings Indian History Congress, 1966*).

10. *Ahkam-i-Alamgiri* (Ganda Singh's *Makhiz*), 74, 75.

11. *Sri Gur Sobha*, 81–90.

12. William Irvine states that Guru Gobind Singh joined Bahadur Shah at some point 'when that prince was on his march down the country, to contest the throne with his brother Azam Shah' (*Later Mughals*, I, 19). Irvine assumes that Guru Gobind Singh had participated in the battle of Jaju. The Sikh tradition also gives him a *mansab* and ascribes Azam Shah's death to an arrow shot by Guru Gobind Singh. But Saina Pat places the meeting at Agra. The later evidence is confused and contradictory. See, for example, Muhammad Shafi Warid, *Tarikh-i-Chaghtai*, SHR 553, 160; Muhammad Qasim Lahori, *Ibratnama*, SHR 1270, 19–21; *Muntakhib-ul-Lubab*, II, 651–52; Mirza Muhammad Harisi, *Ibratnama*, SHR 231, 66–67; Khushwaqt Rai, *Tawarikh-i-Sikhan*, SHR 116, 38; Ahmad Shah, *Tarikh-i-Hind*, 391.

13. Ganda Singh's *Makhiz*, 82.

14. SHR 43, No. 6; see also, Punjab State Archives, Patiala, M/403.

15. Cf. Banerjee, *Evolution of the Khalsa* (2nd. ed.), II, 144–45. Dr. Ganda Singh in his *Banda Singh Bahadur* (Amritsar, 1935, 11) has missed the full import of this letter by suggesting simply that Guru Gobind Singh 'soon expected to return to Punjab'. The crucial word in the letter is of course 'Kahlur'.

    It may also be pointed out here that Guru Gobind Singh is believed to have been actuated to seek justice against Wazir Khan on the assumption that he would naturally think of the personal wrongs done to him by the *faujdar* of Sarhind. This view ignores the fact that Guru Gobind Singh's conflict

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with the Chief of Kahlur was more fundamental. It is easy to attribute the motive of revenge to Guru Gobind Singh, but to do so would be to miss Gobind Singh as the Guru of the Sikhs.

16. Sharma, Sri Ram *The Religious Policy of the Mughal Emperors* (2nd. ed,), 142.

17. *Ibid.*, 141.

18. Even if Bahadur Shah did not know all the detail himself, he was sure to have it from Mun'im Khan who was the most trusted supporter of Bahadur Shah at this time and who knew all that had happened then far.

19. *Tarikh-i-Bahadur Shahi*, SHR 396, 40–61.

20. Banda's meeting with Guru Gobind Singh is a highly controversial point. It cannot be discussed here, but we are aware of the conflicting views expressed by several writers. Our statement on Banda's meeting with Guru Gobind Singh is based primarily on the evidence presented by an anonymous Persian ballad called the *Amarnama* which has been published by Dr. Ganda Singh from Amritsar and by Gurdit Singh from Patiala. Besides the discussion of the point by Dr. Ganda Singh in his *Banda Singh Bahadur* and by Indubhushan Banerjee in the *Evolution of the Khalsa*, see, Muhammad Shafi Warid. *Tarikh-i-Chaghtai*. SHR 553, 160; Ahmad Shah,*Tarikh-i-Hind*, 393; Bakht Mal, *Tawarikh-i-Sikhan*, SHR 1659, 17; Aliuddin, *Ibratnama*, SHR 1277, 207.

21. An entry in the *Akhbarat-i-Darbar-i-Mualla*, dated 28th Oct., 1708 (Ganda Singh's *Makhiz*, 83), read in the light of other available evidence, makes it almost certain that the Afghan who made an attempt on Guru Gobind Singh's life was Jamshid Khan. His motive for doing this cannot be ascertained. The view that he was a hired assassin is based on circumstantial evidence alone and the whole argument is full of flaws. Cf. *Muntakhib-ul-Lubab*, 651–52; *Tarikh-i-Bahadur Shahi*, 40–41; *Tarikh-i-Chaghtai*. 160; Harisi's *Ibratnama*, 66–67; Lahori's *Ibratnama*, 19–21; Bakht Mal's *Tawarikh-i-Sikhan*, 22–23; Khushwaqt Rai's *Tawarikh-i-Sikhan*, 39; Ahmad Shah's *Tarik-hi-Hind*, 322; Ghulam Muhiyuddin's *Tarikh-i-Punjab*, 430–33; Aliuddin's *Ibratnama*, 207; *Sri Gur Sobha*.

See also; *The Sikh Religion*, V, 241; Kirpal Singh. 'Facts About Guru Gobind Singh's Martyrdom', *The Sikh Review*, Sept.-Oct., 1957, 68–73; and Lakshman Singh, *Guru Gobind Singh*, Lahore, 1909, 131.

22. SHR 1442, b, 1–6. This anonymous Punjabi manuscript gives a simple account of the last days of Guru Gobind Singh at Nander and it appears to be a contemporary or very near contemporary evidence. Cf. Trilochan Singh, 'Guru Gobind Singh's Ascension', *The Sikh Review*, Oct., 1963, 13–38.

23. SHR 1442, b, 1–6. Saina Pat also mentions the assailant's death on the spot. This fact disposes of the view of some Persian chroniclers that Guru Gobind Singh had invited his death by encouraging an Afghan to murder him.

24. SHR 1442, b, 1–6.

25. *Ibid.*

26. It came to be generally believed in the late 18th and early 19th century that Guru Gobind Singh's wound re-opened because he stretched a strong bow. This could be a plausible explanation of his death. But the earliest available evidence omits this detail.

27. SHR 1442, b, 1–6.

28. *Ibid.*

29. *Akhbarat-i-Darbar-i-Mualla* (Ganda Singh's *Makhiz*), 83.

30. *Loc. cit.* The argument that the question of the disposal of Guru Gobind Singh's property on his death was raised because he had accepted service with the Mughal Government does not hold good. The question was raised simply because there was no natural male (or female) heir to succeed him at the time of his death. In fact this news-item goes against the view that Guru Gobind Singh had accepted service with the Mughal Government.

31. Cunningham, J. D. *A History of the* Sikhs, S. Chand and Co., 1966, 66.

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1. Ganda Singh, *Banda Singh Bahadur*, 25.

2. *Ibid*, 83. The Persian inscription has been differently translated by J. D. Cunningham, N. K. Sinha, H. R. Gupta, G. L. Chopra, Ganda Singh and Khushwant Singh. The most apt rendering is that of G. L. Chopra :

> Festivity (abundance), sword, victory without delay,
> Guru Gobind Singh received from Nanak.

See, Chopra, G. L. *The Punjab as a Sovereign State*, 153. For a detailed discussion, Bal. S. S. 'Sikh Struggle for Independence and the place of Sovereignty in Sikh polity' (to be published in the *Medieval Indian State*, proceedings of a seminar held at Chandigarh in 1966).

3. Ganda Singh, *Op.Cit*, 155.

4. Between 1716 and 1753, the Punjab was under powerful governors who persecuted the Sikhs ferociously. These governors were : Abdul Samad (1716–1726), Zakariya Khan (1726–1745) Yahiya Khan (1745–1747) and Mir Mannu (1743–1753).

5. A typical example is of Bhai Mani Singh who successfully patched up the differences between the *Tat Khalsa* and the *Bandais* in 1721. It is just possible that similar intervention by respected leaders of the Sikh *panth* saved the differences, between the Orthodox followers of Guru Gobind Singh on the one hand and the *Gulab Rais*, *Gangu-Shahias*, *Handalias*, *Minas*, *Dhirmalias and Ramraiyas* on the other, from taking violent turn on many occasions.

6. Guru Gobind's literary compositions lay scattered after his death. The Guru, according to the traditional Sikh belief, was carrying them with him when he was forced to leave Anandpur in 1704. They were not bound in one volume when he lost them while on the move. Sundari instructed Bhai Mani Singh in 1714 to collect and compile the works of the late Guru in one volume. The Bhai took twenty years to collect the scattered compositions before putting them together in the form of the *Dasam Granth* in 1734.

See Trilochan Singh, 'History and Compilation of Dasam Granth, *The Sikh Review*, April 1955, 56–58.

7. For the dialogue between Nadir Shah and Zakariya Khan, see Gupta, H. R. *History of the Sikhs*, I, 5–6.

8. Zakariya Khan died on 1 July, 1745, and for the next six months, his two sons fought for the governorship. (*ibid*. 17).

9. This was the first *gurumata* of Sikh history. Dr. Gupta puts it on the first Diwali after the death of Zakariya Khan (14 October 1745). Gupta, H. R. *Op.Cit*, I, 21.

10. In theory a *gurumata* means the decision of the whole community, and made in a meeting of their representatives especially called for the purpose. Obviously the decision was binding on the entire Sikh people. See, Teja Singh, *Sikhism : Its Ideals and Institutions*, 117.

11. Sundari survived Guru Gobind Singh by four decades. Her life in these years was full of disappointments. After Guru Gobind Singh's death, she adopted a son in the hope that he would make up for the loss of her real son and gave him the same name as was borne by the hero of Chamkaur. The new Ajit grew up to make the life of Sundari very bitter. Once when she tried to check him from behaving like a Guru and thus incur the wrath of the Khalsa, he tried to kill her. He later cut off his hair and 'grovelled before the Emperor'. Sundari did not see him after this but when he died, she brought up Ajit Singh's son, Hathi Singh. If she believed that this adopted grandson would give a better account of himself than his father, she must have been badly disappointed later. Hathi Singh tried to change the text of the *Granth Sahib* and Sundari left all association with him to retain the respect of the Khalsa for her. She died in 1747, Kohli, S. S. *Bhai Mani Singh*, 11.

12. Gupta, H. R. *Op.Cit*, I, 51.

13. *Ibid.*, 62.

14. *Ibid.*, 66.

15. *Ibid.*, 69.

16. *Ibid.*, 75–76.

17. Bhagat Lakshman Singh, *Sikh Martyrs* 172–177; Malcolm, J. *Sketch of the Sikhs* in the *Sikh Religion: A Symposium*, 112.

18. Gupta, H. R. *Op. Cit*, 67.

19. Mannu died on 3 November, 1753, and in the next three years there were rapid changes in the governorship of the Punjab. The Mughal Governors during this period were: (i) Muhammad Amin Khan (November 1753–May 1754) (ii) Mughlani Begum (May 1754–October 1754) (iii) Munim Khan (October 1754–December 1754) (iv) Khawaja Mirza (December 1754–April 1755) (v) Mughlani Begum (April 1755–July 1755) (vi) Khawaja Abdulla (July 1755–September 1755) (vii) Adina Beg Khan (September 1755–December 1755) (viii) Mughlani Begum (July 1756–March 1756) (ix) Adina Beg Khan (March 1756–October 1756). *Ibid.*, 84 and f. n. on 93.

20. *Rakhi* is the Punjabi word for protection and the *Rakhi* system was devised to give precisely this to the people of the Punjab. The *Dal Khalsa* had undertaken to protect the people both from external attack and internal chaos. H. R. Gupta, *Op. Cit*, 1, 98.

21. *Loc. Cit.*

22. After the battle of Panipat, Ahmad Shah Abdali had made Sarbuland Khan the *subedar* of Multan; Khawaja Abed that of Lahore, and entrusted the Government of the Jullundur *doab* to Raja Ghammand Chand Katoch with Saadat Khan and Sadiq Khan as his deputies. Sarhind was in the charge of Zain Khan. Within five months of the battle of Panipat, however, the Sikhs broke the Abdali arrangement. This was particularly true of the Lahore and Sarhind administration of the Afghan conqueror. *Ibid.*, 155–161.

23. Gupta, H. R. *Studies in the Later Mughal History of the Punjab*, 1707-1793, 309. The Persian lines, according to Gupta, bear the following meaning:

> Coined by the grace of God in the country of
> Ahmad captured by Jassa Kalal.

24. *Ibid.*, 315.

25. *Wada Ghallughara* would mean a great massacre. For the number of Sikhs killed in this massacre see, Sinha, N. K, *Rise of the Sikh Power*, 47.

26. Gupta, H. R. *History of the Sikhs*, 186-188.

See Trilochan Singh, 'History and Compilation of Dasam Granth, *The Sikh Review*, April 1955, 56–58.

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26. Gupta, H. R. *History of the Sikhs*, 186-188.

27. *Ibid.*, 190.

28. *Ibid.*, 190-200.

29. Sinha, N. K. *Rise of the SikhPower*, 54.

30. Gupta. H. R. *History of the Sikhs*, I, 216-218.

31. *Ibid.*, 218-219.

32. *Ibid.*, 230.

33. *Ibid.*, 231-236.

34. *Ibid.*, 236.

35. *Ibid.*, 238.

36. These coins were struck in 1768, 1769, 1770, 1772, 1774, 1775, 1776, 1777, 1778 and again in the years 1786, 1787, 1788. Dr. Chopra to whom we owe the above information did not see any coins of these types of the years from 1790 to 1797 in the collection in the British Museum; that would not however mean that they were not struck in these years. Chopra, G. L. *The Punjab as a Soverign State*, 153-156.

37. Ranjit Singh occupied Lahore on 7 July 1799, and got himself coronated as the Maharaja on 12 April, 1801 (Baisakhi of 1858 Bk), but, instead of striking coins in his own name, got them minted with the inscription which attributed his triumph to Gobind. It is also worth noting that even when he took the title of the Maharaja, the seal of his government bore no reference to him. He also seems to have declared that his government was to be called *Sarkar Khalsaji* and his *darbar* to be described as *Darbar Khalsaji*. Khushwant Singh, *Ranjit Singh*, 30, 47; Chopra, G. L. *Op. Cit.*, 154.

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Chronology of Guru Gobind Singh

1666 : Born at Patna on December, 22.

1672 : Left Patna for Makhowal in February.

1673 : Betrothed to Jito on May 28.

1675 : Execution of Tegh Bahadur on Nov., 11.

1676 : Gobind ascended the *gaddi* on March 30.

1677 : Married Jito on July 5.

1678-80 : Change in the policy by his uncle, Kripal.

1680 : The 'Kabuli tent' and the 'Parsadi elephant' presented to the young Guru Gobind.

1682 : The Sikhs repulsed Bhim Chand's attack on Makhowal.

1682-85 : Composed the *Jap*, the first 20 verses of the *Akal Ustat*, the *Chandi Charittar Ukat Bilas*, and the first 1186 verses of the *Krishan Avtar*.

1685 : Married Sundari, on May 15; left

Makhowal for Sirmur, on Medni Parkash's invitation, in July; founded Paonta on August 6.

1686 : Met Ram Rai twice; reconciled Medni Parkash of Sirmur and Fateh Shah of Garhwal to each other; Ajit born to Sundari on Nov., 16.

1686-87 : Composed *Shastar Nam Mala Puran* and *Chandi di Var*.

1687 : Started on the *Krishan Avtar*, again, in July-Aug.

1688 : Completed the *Krishan Avtar*, in August; fought the Battle of Bhangani on October 3; and returned to Makhowal in December.

1688-90 : Built the forts of Anandgarh, Keshgarh, Lohgarh and Fategarh.

1690 : Participated in the battle of Nadaun in Feb.–March; Jujhar Singh born to Jito on March 20.

1691-93 : Composed the *Pakhyan Charittar* and completed the *Akal Ustat*.

1694 : The Khanzada's unsuccessful attack on Anandpur (Makhowal) in Nov.–Dec

1695 : Hussain's venture and Gobind's anxiety; the defeat of the Mughal commander Jujhar Singh at Bhalan in July-August.

1696 : Muazzam's campaigns against the Hill Chiefs, from August to December.

1696-97 : Composed the autobiographical *Bachittar Natak*; a phase of intense literary activity, with the *Chaubis Avtar*, *Brahma Avtar* and *Uppa Avtar*.

1697 : Zorawar Singh born to Jito on January 14.

1698 ; Completed the *Ram Avtar* before the end.

1699 : Fateh Singh born to Jito on February 22; *Instituted the Khalsa* on March 30; and removed the majority of the *masands*.

1700 : Skirmishes of the Khalsa with Bhim Chand's men in Sept.-Oct. and the siege of Anandpur by Bhim Chand and his allies in Nov.-Dec.

1701 : Evacuated Anandpur to settle down at Nirmoh; composed the *Benati Chaupai*; and asked the Khalsa to visit Anandpur fully armed.

1702 : Fought the allied Hill and Mughal troops at Nirmoh and on the bank of the Sutlej, in the beginning; fought the battle of Basoli with Bhim Chand by April; occupied the fortress of Kalmot by June; and re-occupied Anandpur by August.

1702-04 : Improved the fortifications of Anandpur and trained the Khalsa to use cannon; attacked by the allied Hill and Mughal troops in the latter half.

1704 : The great siege of Anandpur by the allies; and its evacuation by Gobind Singh on December 21; the battle of Sarsa on the same day and the battle of Chamkaur on the day following and the death of Ajit Singh and Jujhar Singh; the execution of Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh at Sarhind and the death of Mata Gujari on December 27.

1705 : Composed '*Mittar Piyare nun hal muridan da kehna*'; fought the battle of Khidrana (Muktsar) in May; wrote a letter to Aurangzib *(the Zafarnama)*; and settled down at Talwandi Sabo (Damdama) in November.

1706 : Prepared a new recension of the *Adi Granth* by June; decided to meet Aurangzib by October and left Damdama in November.

1707 : Heard of Aurangzib's death near Baghaur in Rajasthan in April; visited Delhi in June; met Bahadur Shah at Agra on July 23; marched with him in November.

1708 : With or near the Imperial camp in Rajasthan in the first half; reached Nander by the middle of September; encounter with the *bairagi* (Banda) a few days later; wounded by Jamshid Khan and composed '*Rogan te ar sogan te jal jogan te*' before the end of September; died on October 7.

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Errata

p 28. *l* 25.	read	*grandson*	for	*younger son*
p 28. *l* 26.	read	*grandfather's*	for	*father's*
p 29. *l* 6.	read	*younger son*	for	*son*
p 60. *l* 13.	read	*Markandaya*	for	*Markandya*
p 61. *l* 12.	read	*Sikand*	for	*Granth*
p 62. *l* 6.	read	*research*	for	*search*
p 69. *l* 6.	read	*Shikoh*	for	*Shah*
p 76. *l* 20.	read	*rasa*	for	*rus*
p 76. *l* 21.	read	*Vatsalya*	for	*Vastsakya*
p 76. *l* 22.	read	*Shringar*	for	*Shrinagar*
p 95. *l* 18.	read	*ecclesiastical*	for	*eccleslial*
p 116. *l* 3.	read	1699	for	1969.
p 155. *l* 11.	read	7th	for	18th
p 193. *l* 18.	read	1644	for	1664
p 193. *l* 30.	read	1631	for	1672
p 194. *l* 37.	read	*serious*	for	*series*
p 195. *l* 22.	read	*tradition*	for	*stradition*

from p 197. *l* 17. to p 198. *l* 6 read as follows:

39. Some have given "Gurbux Singh Gyani" as the name of the Punjabi teacher. May be Sahib Chand assumed that name after becoming a Khalsa. Khazan Singh, *Op,Cit. I.* 163; Teja Singh Ganda Singh, *Op.Cit.*, 60.

40. Lachman Singh believes that Guru Gobind Singh had a very efficient Rajput tutor to train him in martial exercises. He pays this tutor of the Guru a well deserved compliment by describing him as an 'expert Rajput' but does not give us the name of that excellent coach. Khazan Singh calls this Raj-

put tutor Bajar Singh Rajput but the peculiarity of the name Bajar creates the impression that perhaps Khazan Singh made a mistake and Bajar was the surname of the tutor. Jagindar Singh appears to regard Bajar to be a sub-caste and so says that Gobind's tutor in martial exercises was 'Bajar Rajput' Khazan Singh, *Op. Cit* ;1,63; Jagindar Singh Ramdev, *Punjabi Likhari Kosh*, 117.

41. Guru Gobind wrote extensively in Braj Bhasha. In fact, his compositions, as preserved in *Dasam Granth* are mostly in that language.

42. Guru Gobind Singh's Persian compositions, *Zafarnama* and *Hakayat*. reveal an excellent grounding in that language.

43. When Guru Gobind finished writing *Chandi di Var*, an excellent Punjabi composition, he was hardly twenty-one.

44. In 1706 Guru Gobind Singh dictated the *Adi Granth* when the Mughal forces were pursuing him and his position was full of danger.

p 198, *l* 22.	read	1657	for	1675
p 198, *l* 36.	read	1659	for	1962
p 200, *l* 15.	read	61	for	60
p 244, *l* 4.	read	1962	for	1963
p 256, *l* 8.	read	*Jagindar*	for	*Joginder*
p 256, *l* 11.	read	*Guru Gobind Singh : A Descriptive Bibliography*	for	*Bibliography of Guru Gobind Singh*
p 258, *l* 7.	read	*Loehlin*	for	*Leohlin*